The Roles of Advertising and Media in Politics: A Review

Godwin Edison Snieder

Department of History, Faculty of Arts and Philosophy, Ghent University, Belgium.

ABSTRACT

Advertising has evolved with time and today stands at a place it has carved for itself. In fact, it would not be an exaggeration to state that nothing sells today without advertising. Self-publicity is the buzzword in the consumerist culture of the modern world. Even with effective advertising, soil could be sell. Advertising heavily supports many institutions, Keywords: Advertisment, Media, Politics. *including news media outlets, the television industry, search engine companies, and social media websites. Despite its usefulness, it thus posses both positive and negative effect in the society specifically on politics therefore various media house such as twitter has place some restriction and policies regarding it uses.*

INTRODUCTION

Advertising is the paid promotion that uses strategy and messaging about the benefits of a product or service to influence a target audience's attitudes and/or behaviors [1]. Between online, television, radio, and print platforms, the average American sees hundreds, even thousands of advertisements daily. Although many consumers find them annoying, advertisements play a prominent role in shaping opinions about everything from products to politics. A Forbes article (2012) stated: "Advertising plays the same role in your media diet that vegetables play in your regular diet; most of us would prefer to skip that course and go straight to dessert. But, just like veggies, advertising plays an important role in sustaining a body; in this case, a diverse body of content" (para. 1). Advertising heavily supports many institutions, including news media outlets, the television industry, search engine companies, and social media websites. For example, advertising contributes up to 80 percent of revenue for newspapers and therefore is critical to maintaining the circulation of the press . The advertising industry is also lucrative. According to [2], the United States spent approximately $190 billion on advertising in 2015. About a third of that figure went to television advertisements, and another third went to digital advertising. With its economic and cultural function in society, the advertising industry has an expansive reach.

Positive Effect Of Advertising

Advertisements increase sales: Advertisements help to increase the sale of goods, so producers can sell goods at reasonable prices. Advertisement acts as grease for smooth functioning of marketing. It promotes products among general masses and encourage them to purchase product [2]. There were so many sales tactics to enhance marketing. In films advertisements regarding films revels about the contents of the film to make viewers to decide either to watch movie or not.

Raise standards of living: Advertisements raise the standards of living of people by drawing their attention to new products and ideas. A person is always keen to try something new in his life that can become his status symbol [3]. In films, Advertisements through visuals tells audience about the look of the film. Even when viewers did not watch film only through advertisement of the film they can follow the look of the film.

Pervasive: Advertising can be found in every aspect of life. It is found in magazines, radio programs, in newspapers, in streets, or in kiosks. Now it has become a part and parcel of everyone's life [4]. Even small children listen to the advertisements very keenly. Because of this popularity, film industry utilises this means to popular their films on various popular mediums of advertisements to make their reach. Maximum the viewers or followers, maximum will be reach of product or Campaign of film. The most popular TV reality shows has maximum reach to masses and the advertisement on these channels results great reach. Because of this so many stars appear personally in various popular reality shows for publicity of their films.

Easily understandable: The businessmen try to sell their products in the way by which people can grasp a product easily. So, they try to communicate with them in their language only [5]. Similarly, one entertainment media with easy approach makes film marketing more popular as it is easy to understand without any special tutorials and language. Entertainment has its own means of communication through laughter, poetry, skits etc.

Reach: Advertising can reach a large market. As through various media of advertising, there is benefit of mass reach e.g., any message given on All India Radio/TV/ social media can reach in different corners of the country wherever TV, Radio and social network is available [4]. As mobile media, everyone use it frequently being hand and easy to accessible the massage flashes can easily spread all over within few seconds.

Choice: There is a wide variety of media available for advertising for video, audio, print media etc. Under each category, large variety is available, for example, in print media we can select from magazines, newspapers, banners, etc. Because of this, the most popular medium of Advertisements are selected by the media planners so that the publicity of film could reach at grass root level [6].

Economy: It is always felt that advertising increase a cost of product or service but advertising is considered economical because it reaches masses and if we calculate cost per customer, it is very low or nominal [7]. As far effective media is concerned, the popularity of medium was judged with number of user. In spite of being expensive medium it also lures more viewers to watch that film and earn profit.

Develops Tourism: Because of advertisement of tourism on large scale, lots of tourists come to our place to have a glimpse of every historical place found here. Their visit increases the treasures of government. Similar in film shooting, most of locations used by film makers becomes popular as tourist destination. As Maximum shoots at Switzerland by late film maker, Yash Chopra popularised its lakes and other spots to promoted tourism. After the shoot of film Slum Dog milliner, the slums at Dharavhi in Mumbai where this film was became spot of attraction for tourists.

Negative Aspect Of Advertisement

It is an Impersonal Communication: In advertising, there is no direct communication between the customer and marketer. The marketer assumes that the message is communicated but the audience or customers do not pay attention to impersonal messages conveyed through advertising. In advertising, there is only one way communication i.e. communication from seller only, but two way communication is always more effective as in two way communication, the customers gets chance to clarify his or her queries [8]. Sometimes customers have many doubts regarding the use of products, these doubts can be clarified only when there is a two way communication. In films the chosen shoots for publicity, may be not incorporated in film and used just to attract audiences and its one way communication may not conveys what exactly the contents of the film.

Difficulty in media choice: In advertising, various media are available. Each media have its own advantages and disadvantages. So the effectiveness of advertisement depends to a great extent on the right choice of media. When choice

of media is faulty or wrong, no matter how good the advertisement is, it will not reach the target customers [9]. In the era of competition there are so many social media challenges which needed to be addressed carefully to advertise film contents. These days mostly reality shows are becoming big platforms before the release of the film.

- **Inflexibility**: It is very difficult to change advertisement; as companies use standardized messages which cannot be changed according to the need of the customers. Film advertisements does not appears as per the demand of consumers, they appears as per the set pattern designed by the marketing agencies [10].
- **Lack of feedback**: The evaluation of effectiveness of advertisement is very difficult as there is no immediate and accurate feedback given by the customers. It is one sided affair and consumers only get what agencies provides.
- **Advertising confuses rather than helps**: The number of advertisements shown in TV, Radio FM and social media are increasing day by day. For example, if we take TV, there are so many advertisements of different companies, for example, LG, Onida, Sony, Samsumg, Videocon etc; each brand claiming that they are the best. These claims by different companies confuse the customer and it becomes very difficult for him to make choice.
- **Advertisement costs are passed on the customers**: The most serious objection to advertisement is that it increases the price of product because the firms spend the huge amount on advertisement and these expenses are added to cost and customers has to pay a higher price for the product or service.
- **Bad taste**: Advertisements use bad language, the way they are speaking may not appeal everyone.

Some advertisements distort relationship between employer employee, mother-in-law and daughter-in-law etc. For example, in advertisement of Band aid, detergent bar, fevistick etc [11].

Recent advances guiding advertisement and politics

Twitter announced the details of its new political advertising policy recently, and once it goes into effect before the end of 2019, politicians won't be able to run false advertisements on Twitter [12]. But they also won't be able to run adverts that correct the spread of misinformation.

Oil and gas companies will be able to continue promoting fossil fuels, but environmental advocacy organizations won't be able to run ads supporting a carbon tax. And when President Trump tweets about the strength of the economy or about alleged corruption by a political opponent, no opposition candidate can run an ad on Twitter to counter the enormous organic reach of the person holding the highest elected office in the country [13].

During the 2020 election cycle, on a platform that is one of the greatest technological innovations in free expression in our lifetimes, candidates won't be able to use ads to speak their views on political issues or gain access to wider audiences, and advocacy organizations won't be able to use ads to push for legislative changes [14]. (Twitter will allow ads related to social causes such as climate change, gun control and abortion, though these ads will be subject to restrictions on targeting.) They can do these things with TV, radio, newspaper and Facebook advert (ads). But they won't be able to do them on Twitter.

Political advertising has long been controversial, but broad bans on digital platforms will harm our democratic process by silencing voices and reducing the range of views that reach voters. Digital advertising plays a particularly important role in political communication in an era of heightened media choice and fragmented public attention [13]. Tech platforms have greatly lowered the costs of running political advertising. No longer

do candidates need to invest significant sums of time and money to produce and buy 30-second television spots or take out full-page ads in newspapers.

A recent research paper by leading political advertising scholars found that a more diverse array of candidates advertises on Facebook than on television, particularly down-ballot candidates and challengers to incumbents. Other research has found that digital political advertising has the potential to increase voting, especially among young voters harder to reach through mass media. Candidates run digital political ads to find voters, convert them into donors and volunteers, and to mobilize them on Election Day [14].

Political advertising also has undeniable downsides, including meaningful social costs when powerful people distribute messages meant to inflame or confuse, or to dissuade the electorate from voting. While digital political adverts have the power to mobilize, they also have the potential to polarize. Look no further than the president's re-election campaign's "invasion" ads on Facebook [14].

Instead of Twitter's overly broad and ill-conceived blanket ban on political ads, and confusing restrictions on issue ads, it could have considered four common-sense changes to political advertising that would help to mitigate some of the most egregious abuses and instill more confidence in the platforms' stated commitments to election integrity. Facebook still has time to do so. These are proposals that we developed together (based on Matt's experience working at Facebook and Daniel's decade of research on digital campaigning) [13].

First, instead of banning political adverts entirely, platforms should not permit "data opacity" for political ads and should have clear enforcement mechanisms for violations of targeting policies. Facebook allows advertisers to bring their own data to their platforms for targeting purposes, and Twitter has similar tools for commercial ads. For example, a car dealer can bring a list of potential customers to Facebook, and then target Facebook ads to those people. The advertiser provides a hashed list of individuals meaning that they are de-identified and the platform has no visibility into who is on the list or why [12].

What might be largely innocuous for commercial speech has significant potential harm for politics. While it might be democratically desirable for the N.A.A.C.P. to be able to target African-Americans in a voter registration drive, the same systems allow bad actors to potentially generate lists of racists to mobilize and target people of color to dissuade them from voting [10]. So even though Facebook aims to promote social cohesion, it's easy to run ads that intend to create social division when companies don't see the data that advertisers bring to the platform.

To prevent this, platforms could end the practice of allowing advertisers to bring external data to their ad systems entirely. The downside is that this would eliminate good uses of these tools in addition to the troubling ones [6].

Alternatively, platforms could require political advertisers to move away from data opacity and toward data transparency by permitting only certain types of verified targeting lists, such as lists of all registered voters of a certain party in a certain district [10]. More transparency would incentivize good practice, and platforms could take steps to verify audience lists and perform random audits to improve enforcement and ensure accountability.

Second, targeting categories and the advertising auctions and algorithms that deliver ads based on those categories should not make it easy for advertisers to undermine the platforms' own stated goals, whether it is Facebook's desire for social cohesion or Twitter's goal of healthy discourse [9]. Just as all major platform companies have voluntarily put in place verification processes for political advertising and created political digital ad archives, instead of banning political ads they can set further limits on the categories political advertisers can target (such as geographic region, interests, ideology, race and ethnicity, or gender). Platforms could review their

existing categories to ensure they do not enable targeting that can undermine their missions, circumvent community standards or is likely to facilitate illegal activity [4].

Third, platforms should introduce product solutions that facilitate counter-speech. For instance, when a platform publishes a political ad in its ad archive, it could enable verified rival campaigns to publish ads to the exact same audience. This approach would be a privacy-protective way of ensuring that there is an opportunity for counter-speech, since platforms could enable the functionality without passing audience details or strategic information to rival campaigns [4].

Finally, companies repeatedly state that political advertising doesn't have a material effect on their bottom line [10]. If that's the case, instead of banning political ads they should put their political advertising money where their mouth is, and commit to donating all revenue from political advertising to nonprofits and researchers focused on election integrity. Or invest that money directly in the development and improvement of their election integrity products [12].

In the face of intense pressure by the press, activists and policymakers, tech platforms should resist blunt solutions that greatly narrow the possibilities for expression for those vying for public office and contesting public issues [8]. Blanket bans on political ads especially harm those without pre-existing large audiences and challengers to established elites. By putting changes in place that shine a spotlight on targeting practices, we can address some of the worst abuses of political ads technologies, while also leaving space for speech that's critical for a robust democracy.

CONCLUSION

Advertising is a great combination of all my passions. More researched works of scientists, scholars, marketers, and economists have been accessed. The only common thread discovered is no one really understands the true potential of advertising. Yes, it has the power to sway political elections and create financial monopolies when correctly implemented. And its unanimous advertising does affect human behavior when factors such as mood and opportunity are taken into account. It has the ability to reshape different cultures and influence civil action. Therefore there is need to regulate policies that will help control the public use of media and advertisement.

REFERENCES

1. Ackerberg, D. A (2001). Empirically distinguishing informative and prestige effects of advertising. *RAND Journal of Economics* 32(2): 316–333.
2. Allen, M. and Burrell, N. (2002). The negativity effect in political advertising. In: Dillard, JP, Pfau, M (eds) The Persuasion Handbook: Developments in Theory and Practice. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, pp. 83–96.
3. Ansolabehere, S., Iyengar, S. and Simon, A. (1999). Replicating experiments using aggregate and survey data: The case of negative advertising and turnout. The American Political Science Review 93(4): 901–909.
4. Arens, F. W. (2002). Contemporary Advertising (8th ed.). McGraw-Hill Book Company New York.
5. Belch, E. (2001). Advertising and Promotion An Integrated Marketing Communications Perspective. McGraw-Hill Book Company Sydney.
6. Brooks, D. J (2006), The resilient voter: Moving toward closure in the debate over negative campaigning and turnout. Journal of Politics 68(3): 684–696.
7. Brooks, D. J and Geer, J. G. (2007). Beyond negativity: The effects of incivility on the

electorate. American Journal of Political Science 51(1): 1–16.

8. Brooks, D. J. and Murov, M. (2012). Assessing accountability in a post-citizens united era the effects of attack ad sponsorship by unknown independent groups. American Politics Research 40(3): 383–418.

9. Clinton, J. D. and Lapinski, J. S (2004). Targeted advertising and voter turnout: An experimental study of the 2000 presidential election. Journal of Politics 66(1): 69–96.

10. Jack, E. (1980). Advertising: The Process and Practice. McGraw-Hill Book Company Sydney.

11. Lee, M. and Johnson, C. (1999). Principles of Advertising: A Global Perspective. The Haworth Press, Inc. New York.

12. Michel, T. P., Maggie, G. and Patrick, D. P. (2013). The Influence of Ad-Evoked Feelings on Brand Evaluations: Empirical Generalizations from Consumer Responses to More Than 1000 TV Commercials *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, vol. 30, no. 4

13. Sawyer, L. (2004). Future rests with best of best. Advertising Age, 75(19), 26-27

14. Wells, W., Burnett, J. and Moriarty. (2000). Advertising: Principles and Practice (5th ed.) Prentice Hall International, Inc., Upper Saddle River, New Jersey.