

AMBIENT ADVERTISING OF GLOBAL BRANDS

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ABSTRACT

Ambient advertising creates possibilities of interaction with the recipient by evoking miscellaneous emotions and feelings and it is often referred to as a non-standard promotion tool. Ambient advertising creates a positive atmosphere around the advertised product. The basis of its effectiveness is its informal message, which is ingenious and creative. The aim of the research was the identification of the recipients' attitudes towards ambient advertising.

The respondents who participated in the in-depth research were interested in ambient advertising. Ambient adverts caused surprise and interest. They were referred to as innovative and hilarious. The ambient adverts presented were perceived positively and their message, in the respondents' opinion, was effective. Ambient advertising through its innovativeness and distinctiveness is an interesting form of advertising, which is perceived positively by society.

KEY WORDS: ambient advertising, consumer, global brand

INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The measure of success is the increased number of sales of the advertised goods and services, keeping customers aware of the brand and evoking the desired behaviour (Zawierucha 2008). Reaching the desired goals depends mostly on the advertising media. Modern tools used in advertising resulting from solutions proposed by different traditional media is huge, nevertheless, searching for more modern methods, forms and carriers of advertising is unavoidable. On account of increasing the effectiveness of reaching the recipient, the attractiveness of traditional media emitting commercials decreases (Bryła 2008). To increase the effectiveness of the expenditures on advertising, managers in companies examine and seek for solutions giving its optimal usage. It can be reached through proper, i.e. ensuring that it will reach the target market maximally, choice of methods and techniques (Rudzewicz, Szarmach 2009). The aim of the research was the identification of the recipients' attitudes towards ambient advertising. The goal has been reached on the basis of evaluating the elements of ambient advertising by companies operating on the international market: Nike, IKEA, and Panasonic. The research was conducted in April 2012. The individual in-depth interview was used together with the personal questionnaire. The grading from 1 to 5 was used in multiple choice questions, where each grade referred to the level of acceptance, or the severity of the problem. Randomly chosen people expressed their opinions about the examples of ambient adverts. Two hundred and twenty people participated in the research, where women comprised 57 and men 43 percent. Mainly, these were the people between 25 to 54 years old, employed, with secondary or higher education and earning a monthly income of 350 Euro per person.

Table 1. The characteristics of respondents in percentages

Characteristics of respondents criteria		
Sex	woman	57
	men	43
Age	15-24	15
	25-34	32
	35-44	14
	45-54	26
	55-64	8
	over 65	5
Education	elementary	3
	vocational	11
	technical	6
	secondary	47
	higher	56
Employment status	student	19
	employed	59
	unemployed	14
	pensioner / retired	8
Monthly income per person	to 1500 PLN	48
	1501 – 2500 PLN	27
	2501 – 3500 PLN	19
	over 3500 PLN	6

Source: own work based on research

AMBIENT ADVERTISING – THE CONTEMPORARY METHOD OF COMMUNICATION WITH THE MILIEU

According to Luxton and Lachland Drummond (2000) the term ambient was first used in 1996 by Concorde Advertising, a well-known British advertising agency specializing in outdoor campaigns. The term was applied due to the necessity of giving a short and concise name for 'something different'. The main aim of these actions was to place adverts in unusual places, which had not been originally taken into account as good venues for adverts. Among such places were floors, fuel dispensers as well as the inside of the toilet door. Such campaigns did not fit the existing categories and owing to this fact a new term was coined. Ambient adverts are the advertising media which surround the potential recipient from all directions. They are situated in a particular area and they cannot remain unnoticed or one cannot escape their presence. The potential recipient is beset by the ambient advertising message in the least expected moment. Usually it is impossible to defend oneself from this kind of advertising as it is usually possible in case of traditional advertisements. Ambient advertising reaches the consumer in an unconventional way and above all, in comparison to traditional advertising media, it is difficult to classify according to the obvious criteria (Wilczek i in. 2008). A term 'non-standard communication tool' is often used with reference to ambient advertising (Wilczek 2005).

Ambient actions could mean painting the pavements, organising simulated manifestations and street protests, as well as placing adverts on conveyor belts at the supermarket check outs (Samborski 2001). Some other examples of ambient media will include: spraying graffiti on the pavements, gluing stickers on the bus stops and building walls, or some other elements of the products which could stimulate the consumer (e.g. protruding bottle necks or deodorant cans).

Positive atmosphere created around the product makes ambient advertising so distinctive. The main aim of such practices is to draw the consumer's and media attention so that talking about a brand could be entertaining. The informal message by word of mouth (word-of-mouth marketing) is the effectiveness of the advertising message. Another reason for the effectiveness is surprise or ingenuity (Grzybowska-Brzezińska 2010). It definitely increases the chances of

being mentioned in the media free of charge as they seek for interesting information. Knowing the target group is also essential. It allows to select a proper place and time for the beginning of advertising (SZLAK 2003). Ambient emphasises humour, creativity and as a result the involvement of the recipients (participation emphasises the message). Ambient media can be divided as follows:

- first - **in motion** - reaching consumers on the go (e.g. adverts on mailboxes, fuel dispensers, TV panels, tickets or postcards),
- second - **in a city** - reaching consumers in their daily lives (e.g. adverts on vehicles, beer mats, toilets, cinema tickets, festivals, illuminated shopping windows, phone booths),
- third **aimed at children** (e.g. sponsored course books, adverts in the entertainment centres, adverts on the school litter bins),
- fourth, found **in retail trade** - communication near the selling point (e.g. adverts on shopping trolleys, floor panels, receipts, on indoor advertising hoardings),
- fifth, referred to as “**odd**” – everything that cannot match the other categories (e.g. big furry taxi cabs, adverts on the bicycles, adverts using people, adverts on the bags) (Paluchowski, Marciniak 2005, Hatalaska 2002,).

To make a consumer respond to the arguments of the adverts, they ought to be understandable and clear for the addressee. It should awaken people's interest and encourage people to buy their products Advertising message should be argumentative so that it exposes the genuine features and substantive advantages of the product, which are of the most interest for the future consumer (Grzybowska-Brzezińska, Żuchowski 2009). In shaping the consumer's attitude under the influence of advertising message emotions play a fundamental role (Rudzewicz, Szarmach 2008).

AMBIENT ADVERTISING IN THE VIEW OF THE RESPONDENTS

Three types of ambient advertising were presented to the respondents in order to examine the public opinion on the issue of non-standard advertising. The first ad that to be presented was by Nike (picture 1) then the interviewees assessed the statements in relation to the ad (picture 2).

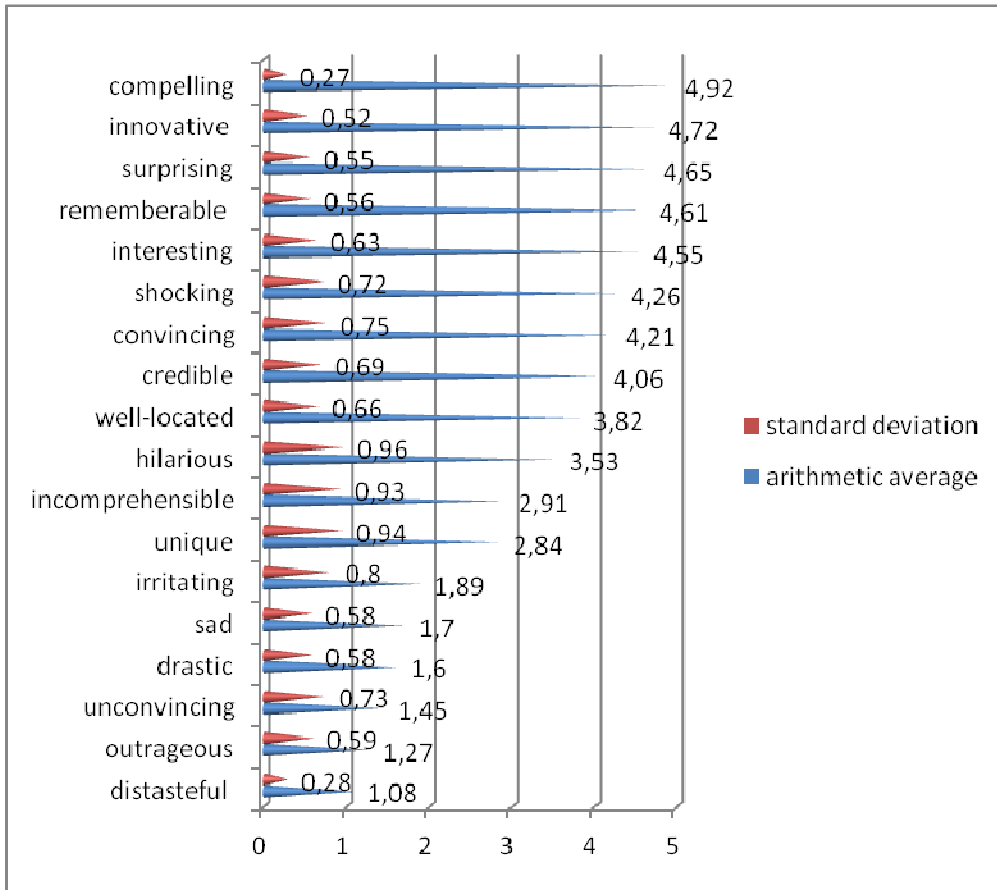


Picture 1. Ambient advertising campaign by Nike

Source: <http://memoryfive.blogspot.com/2010/01/reklama-ktora-chciaa-byc-sztuka.html>

The summary of the results shows unequivocally that ambient advertising of Nike products evokes many emotions and feelings. According to the respondents the Nike advert draws people's attention (4,92), it is innovative (4,72) causes great surprise (4,66). The evaluation of the advert at the level of 4,55 in view of the respondents guarantees its recall (4,62). The way the advert was presented was assessed as more shocking (4,26) than believable (4,06), which causes a huge concern for the particular brand – marked as 4,21. The form of advertising is funny (3,53). Ambient advertising by Nike Company displays positive emotions, which influences the consumers' decisions. Negative emotions accompanied this advert in a minor way. The term distasteful was marked 1,08, but outrageous was marked 1,27.

In order to receive more responses describing ambient advertising, the respondents assessed another advert which had been conducted by IKEA (picture 3). The form of advertising presented to the respondents received high marks of particular, rather positive impressions (picture 4).

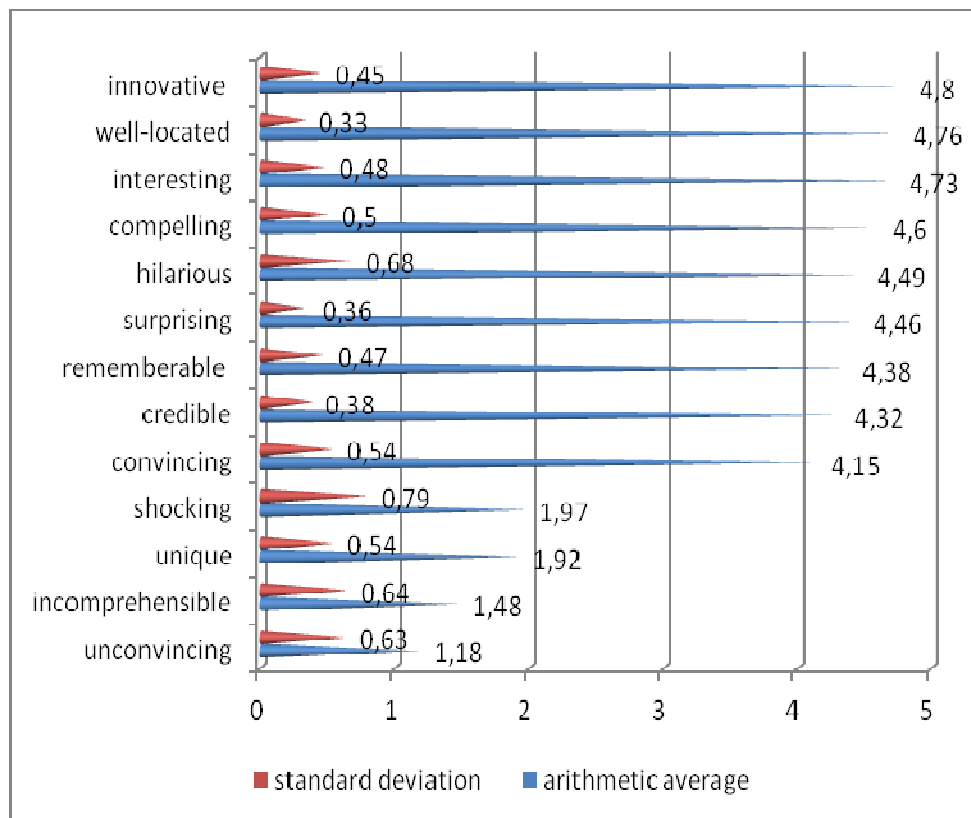


Picture 2. Assessment of Nike advert (from 1 to 5)
 Source: own work based on research



Picture 3. Ambient advertising campaign by IKEA
 Source: <http://hatalaska.com/2008/10/13/z-klasyki-ambientu-czyli-przystanki-inaczej/>

Continuing the analysis of the collected data, it has been shown that IKEA advert was assessed very well by the respondents. The creativity of the ad was marked 4,80.



Picture 4. Assessment of the elements in IKEA advert (from 1 to 5)

Source: own work based on research

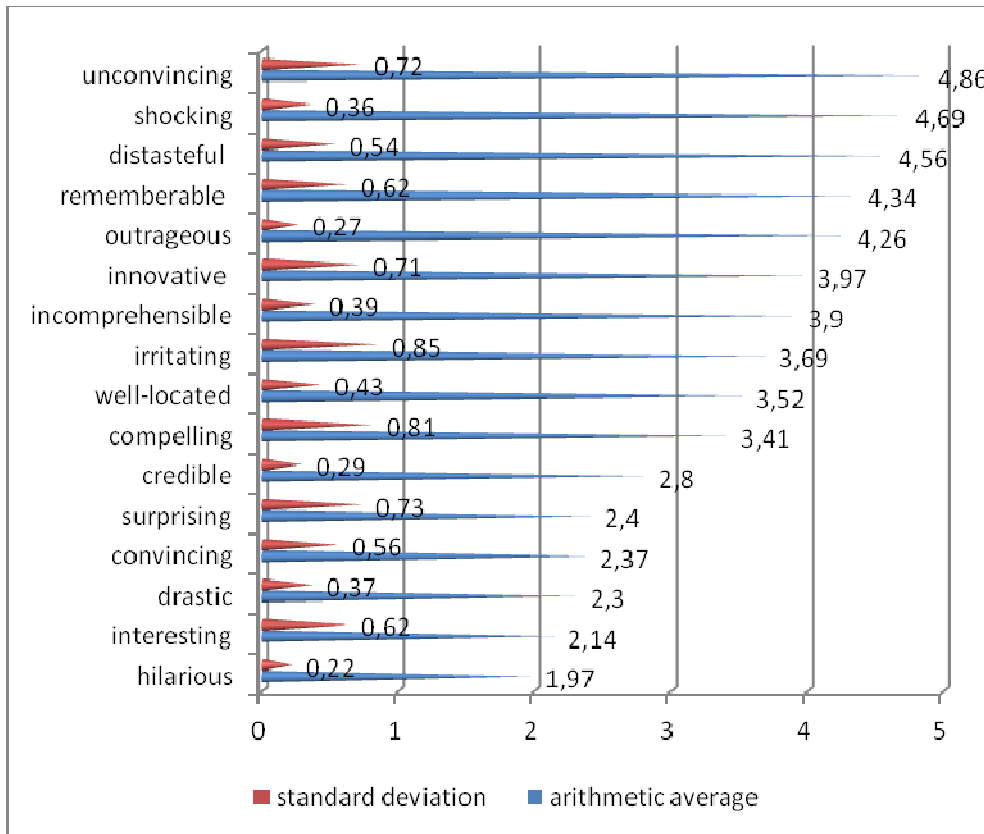
Accurate location was marked positively (4,76), surprising, unusual form (4,46) and its huge credibility (4,33); according to respondents the advertisement was convincing – it was marked 4,15. In that case it should be mentioned that no negative emotions were associated with that advert. Its perception is definitely positive.

Another advert that was assessed concerned trimmers produced by Panasonic (picture 5). The data collected allowed to prioritise the elements characteristic of Panasonic advert (picture 6).



Picture 5. Ambient advertising of trimmers by Panasonic
 Source: <http://marketingowiec.pl/artykul/niestandardowo-na-outdoorze>

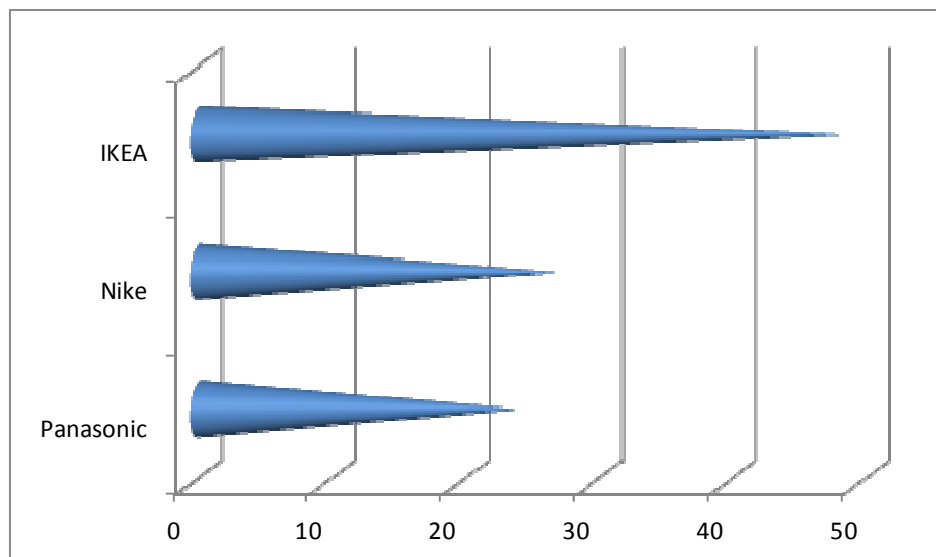
The advert received less favourable opinions. Firstly, it is unconvincing (4,86), unattractive (4,56) or even outrageous. It is shocking (4,69) but as a result, more memorable (4,34). The terms 'funny' and 'interesting' were given the lowest mark, i.e. 1,97 and 2,14 respectively. This advert received a lot of criticism, which could have been caused due to the lack of company name and as a result the interviewees did not have any positive connotations.



Picture 6. Assessment of the elements in Panasonic advert (from 1 to 5)

Source: own work based on research

The respondents were asked to indicate the advert which made the biggest impression on them and as a result was the most remembered (picture 7). The interviewees have chosen the best advert in their view.



Picture 7. The best ambient advert (%)

Source: own work based on research

The analysis has shown that the largest percentage of responses was attributed to the IKEA advert (49%), of which 45% of positive responses were made by women. Ambient advertising presented by IKEA was colourful, funny and above all credible. The runner-up was the advert

by Nike which received 27%. Mainly, it was remembered by men (24 %). The advert by Panasonic is characterised by the lowest percentage of the interviewees i.e. 24%.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

New forms of advertising such as ambient draw more and more attention. Ambient advertising creates chances of interaction with the recipient and therefore it is of the main interest for the consumer, expressing various emotions and feelings. Ambient advertising creates a positive atmosphere around the advertised product. The basis of its effectiveness is its informal message, which is ingenious and creative. The research results show unequivocally that the recipients of ambient adverts cannot be referred to as neutral. The research participants were deeply interested in ambient advertising. Ambient adverts caused surprise and interest. They were referred to as innovative and hilarious. The ambient adverts presented were perceived positively and their message was effective. Almost 50% of the respondents were interested in the IKEA advert. Although the Panasonic advert got many negative opinions, it received a high final mark of 24% for its effectiveness. It may be assumed that ambient advertising, through its innovativeness and distinctiveness, is an interesting form of advertising perceived positively by society. If the company wants to ensure that their adverts are original and effective, it should invest in new tools and the research concerning adverts, especially ambient advertising.

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