

The Management Series

Volume 3

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The Admin Know-How Series

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MARKETING POSTERS

Refs:

Marketing Series PLs

PR Series PLs

Art Series HCOBs

When one goes to the expense of printing and disseminating a piece of promotion, one wants to make sure that that promotion will be effective. Posters cost quite a bit of money and thus they have to be made very effective.

The purpose of doing posters is to create want and sell the item.

The essence of what a poster is all about is that it must create a subliminal desire on the part of the viewer. A propaganda poster, of course, includes creating aversions and is directed toward changing ideas. But a marketing poster is basically something which creates want. "Want" means want for the exact product which the poster is about.

Modernly the poster has fallen into bad times as they seldom talk or seldom carry out the mission of a poster. A poster has a sort of a mission. You put it up and it impacts people with your message. It has to be very bold, very commanding.

MESSAGE

The advertising world throws a confusion into the scene as one could easily get an advertisement mixed up with a poster. They're quite different. Ads simply try to sell a product, whereas a poster carries a message which extends even into social spheres. You could study this out and you will see the difference if you look at a few posters.

Earlier posters which were released as ads also, oddly enough, carried a social message.

Madison Avenue has encroached heavily on the world of posters but they have never made it. Posters have been the forefront in the establishment of new cultures, new ideologies, sweeping changes in the world. Even the 19th century ad posters were doing this. Madison Avenue and its ads have simply sagged back into slop. They are being the effect of a culture, not the advance troops of it.

A poster has to have a *message* that identifies, associates and sells. The person designing it needs some acquaintance with what is being sold and its value.

SUBLIMINAL APPEAL

People put up posters because they're pretty. They satisfy some aesthetic desire on their part. A poster must be such that people *want* to put it up just for itself. (Ref: HCOB 29 July 73, Art Series 2, ART, MORE ABOUT)

A poster and its role is covered in a book called, *The Poster in History*, by Max Gallo, published by American Heritage Publishing Company, Inc., New York. As covered on pages 9 and 10 of that book, when doing posters, one must reach some subliminal urge in the viewer.

The way to start a poster then, is to find subliminal appeal whether it has anything to do with the subject matter of a poster or not.

You figure out what your audience subconsciously wants to do or what motivates a want in them and it is on this which you build your design and subject matter. Madison Avenue, being coached by Freud, takes the easy way out by putting pretty girls on posters but there are a thousand, thousand other things that will motivate a want in an audience.

Posters also *position* and give a comparison of the object being advertised to something else to show where it fits in the scheme of things. So you can pick out a subject to market, work out a subliminal message, work out a positioning and then work out the design.

A poster can also concern itself with things people don't want as its subliminal message.

You have to make up your mind what public you are going to reach and then you would have to use surveys and buttons relating to that public in order to get enough agreement to make them look at it. In addition to that, you would have to have a bright idea which aroused some subliminal urge of some sort.

You have to think of something that people would like or which they would subliminally want as related to the product you are doing a poster on. That is a matter of survey. With the survey done you would get a subliminal. With this subliminal, one would then get an idea of what to paint. Not knowing what people would like, you have no guarantee that your flier or poster would create any want at all. It might be pretty, it might be well composed, but it might not create any want at all.

But, you can get so involved in surveys and surveying, particularly when it is done without any knowledge of the item by the person writing the surveys, that you can go entirely adrift and go sinking into the tech of surveys without ever getting into communication.

PICTURE

A picture is not necessarily a poster. A poster has an impact, single-glance message. People have to recognize the message and get the message by a glance at the picture.

A picture usually arouses some subliminal want and compares the product to it.

You should not have to read the captions of a poster to know what it's all about. A poster has to be able to stand alone as a picture. That is the basic definition of a poster. That is the basic definition of a picture.

One never says what is happening in the picture as part of a text for a poster. The picture usually talks itself. If it needs a lot of text, it isn't a good poster.

If a picture is saying one thing and you put a caption on it that says not quite that thing, or doesn't fit with the picture, the poster becomes ineffective.

A totally effective poster stands all by itself without needing any words.

Composition exists inextricably linked to a message in all paintings. If one tries to follow the basic trite conventions, one is not enhancing any message. Composition cannot stand independent of a message. The ideal poster is something which you just paint without any captions or illustrations and people will see it and interpret it at once. That is the ideal poster.

A PICTURE MUST HAVE A MESSAGE ALL BY ITSELF WITHOUT CAPTION.

COMPOSITION IS INEXTRICABLY LINKED TO A MESSAGE.

If you know these two things cold, you can turn out posters.

BASICS

Basics and technical art are vital to pulling off a successful marketing poster. But the only reason they exist is so that one can contribute an idea and execute it in a commanding fashion. These things like composition are there simply to enhance the power of the message. Art is the quality of communication. The reason art exists, actually, is to relay messages of one sort or another. These messages can be feelings, sensations, desires, repugnance and practically anything that anybody is capable of thinking of. The idea is dominant. The technique exists to forward the idea and give it punch and power.

If you grasp these things you can turn out some great posters that will result in a demand for the product.

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Founder

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