

Media Strategies

thanks to D. Sneyd for this mnemonic:

***Never *Call *Snakes *Stupid *Because *They *Start *Eating *People's *Homes, *Causing *Fear**

Bandwagon an appeal to the subject to follow the crowd, to join in because others are doing so as well. "Everyone else is doing it." (eg. "No wonder five million people purchased our product last year!")

Cartoon/Cute: Relies on the "awww" factor of human emotion.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G4Sn91t1V4g>

Celebrity Endorsement: Companies often rely on a celebrity's pre-existing reputation (athletic excellence, glamour, humour, etc.) to lay the groundwork of trust.

Emotional Appeal: Relies on the compassion and empathy of the audience (eg. SPCA ads with Sarah MacLachlan playing in the background)

Facts & Figures: Relies on statistics to relay the message or achieve its purpose (eg.. "4 out of 5 dentists recommend this toothpaste.")

Gender/Sex Appeal: Relies on gender stereotyping and/or the notion that "sex sells". :-(

Humour: Using comedic language (puns, malapropisms); situations; or dramatic irony for humorous effect

Name Calling: An attempt to turn people against an opponent. Often used during political campaigns. (Remember, "He's just not ready."?)

Plain Folks: Often appeals to one's sense of patriotism, or a reference to the commonalities among people (eg. What's more Canadian than a dropping into Tim Horton's on your way to the hockey rink?) Appeals to one's sense of being "down to earth".

Shock Appeal: Advertisements with shock appeal deliberately startle and offend its audience by violating societal norms of values and personal ideals. It is designed to break through the advertising "clutter" to capture the audience's attention. (eg. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FflGOLBNkJk>)

Simple Solutions: Identifies the product as offering a quick and easy solution to a complicated or annoying task. (eg. Slap Chop)

Snob Appeal: Some companies brand themselves as only being for rich people. They do this to appeal to an audience's elitism (eg. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uwOCOm9Z0YE>)

Testimonials: Testimonials are statements written or spoken by consumers of products. They back up companies' claims that their products work or are of high quality.

Transfer: This is a technique of projecting positive or negative qualities (praise or blame) of a person, entity, object, or value (an individual, group, organization, nation, patriotism, etc.) to another in order to make the second more acceptable or to discredit it. eg. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=owGykVbfgUE>

The Basics:

1. **Media are constructions.** *Ask:*
 - Who created this media product?
 - What is its purpose?
 - What assumptions or beliefs do its creators have that are reflected in the content?
2. **Audiences negotiate meaning.** *Ask:*
 - How might different people see this media product differently?
 - How does this make you feel, based on how similar or different you are from the people portrayed in the media product?
3. **Media have commercial (profit) implications.** *Ask:*
 - What is the commercial purpose of this media product (in other words, how will it help someone make money)?
 - How does this influence the content and how it's communicated?
 - If no commercial purpose can be found, what other purposes might the media product have (for instance, to get attention for its creator or to convince audiences of a particular point of view).
 - How do those purposes influence the content and how it's communicated?
4. **Media have social and political implications.** *Ask:*
 - Who and what is shown in a positive light? In a negative light?
 - Why might these people and things be shown this way?
 - Who and what is not shown at all?
 - What conclusions might audiences draw based on these facts?
5. **Each medium has a unique aesthetic form.** *Ask:*
 - What techniques does the media product use to get your attention and to communicate its message?
 - In what ways are the images in the media product manipulated through various techniques (for example: lighting, makeup, camera angle, photo manipulation)?
 - What are the expectations of the *genre* (for example: print advertising, TV drama, music video) towards its subject?

Important questions to consider:

- Who created this message and why are they sending it?
- What techniques are being used to attract my attention?
- What lifestyles, values and points of view are represented in the message?
- How might different people understand this message differently from me?
- What is omitted from this message?
- Consider: What do they SAY they're selling? What are they REALLY selling?

Does the media reflect society or does it create society?

Media Terminology

- **advertisement** - a notice or announcement in a public medium promoting a product, service, or event or publicizing a job vacancy.
- **agenda** - the ability [of the **media**] to influence the topics on the public agenda. That is, if a news item is covered frequently and prominently, the audience will regard the issue as more important.
- **bias** - prejudice in favor of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another, usually in a way considered to be unfair.
- **blog** - a regularly updated website or web page, typically one run by an individual or small group, that is written in an informal or conversational style.
- **brochure** - a small book or magazine containing pictures and information about a product or service.
- **caption** - a title or brief explanation appended to an article, illustration, cartoon, or poster.
- **cartoon** - a simple drawing showing the features of its subjects in a humorously exaggerated way, especially a satirical one in a newspaper or magazine.
- **commercial** - making or intended to make a profit.
- **deconstruct** - analyze (a text or a linguistic or conceptual system) by deconstruction, typically in order to expose its hidden internal assumptions and contradictions and subvert its apparent significance or unity
- **demographic** - relating to the structure of populations. (eg. 18-24 year olds)
- **dialogue bubbles** - to be understood as representing the speech or thoughts of a given character.
- **editorial** - a newspaper item written by or on behalf of an editor that gives an opinion on a topical issue
- **endorsement** - an act of giving one's public approval or support to someone or something.
- **format** - the way in which something is arranged or set out.
- **headline** - a heading at the top of an article or page in a newspaper or magazine.
- **hypertext** - a software system that links topics on the screen to related information and graphics, which are typically accessed by a point-and-click method.
- **icon** - a person or thing regarded as a representative symbol of something.
- **image** - a representation of the external form of a person or thing in art.
- **intent** - intention or purpose.
- **juxtaposition** - two objects placed in close proximity that have contrasting connotations.
- **lead** - the opening (leading) paragraph of an article, essay, news story or book chapter. ... It precedes the main

body of the article, and it gives the reader the main idea of the story.

- logo - a symbol or other design adopted by an organization to identify its products, uniform, vehicles, etc.
- mass media - another word for media.
- media - the main means of mass communication (broadcasting, publishing, and the Internet), regarded collectively.
- media strategies - as used in the advertising or content delivery (online broadcasting) industries, is concerned with how messages will be delivered to consumers or markets.
- medium - an agency or means of conveying the message. (eg. Television is a medium of communication.)
- message - what the ad is trying to portray to its audience; theme
- podcast - a digital audio file made available on the Internet for downloading to a computer or mobile device, typically available as a series, new installments of which can be received by subscribers automatically.
- poster - a large printed picture used for decoration or advertising.
- product - a item that companies wish to sell.
- product placement - the strategic placement of a product which may entice consumers to buy a company's product.
- propaganda - information, especially of a biased or misleading nature, used to promote or publicize a particular political cause or point of view.
- public service announcement - a message in the public interest typically communicated by a governmental or non-governmental organization (NGO). It serves to protect or inform for the purposes of public health or welfare.
- slogan - A short striking phrase used in advertising. (Eg. "Just do it")
- speech balloon - same as dialogue bubbles.
- subliminal message - anything that sends you a message without your knowledge of it, usually picked up on by your subconscious mind.
- subtext - an underlying and often distinct theme in a piece of writing or conversation. Based on assumed previous assertion
- target audience - a particular group at which a film, book, advertising campaign, etc., is aimed. Consider the following: (GLARES: Gender, Age, Religion, Education level, Socio-economic status)
- web page - a hypertext document connected to the World Wide Web.
- white/blank space - the unprinted area of an image or piece of printing.