

# Developments In Business Simulation & Experiential Exercises, Volume 20,1993

## INCORPORATING ADVERTISING CREATIVE STRATEGY INTO COMPUTER-BASED BUSINESS SIMULATIONS

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The effects of advertising creative strategy decisions are very difficult to capture in a quantifiable, and hence, programmable model. This paper draws on the recent research in advertising grid planning models to classify advertising situations and the application functional attitude theory to develop creative strategies. The model establishes a set of theoretically ideal strategies for each type of advertising situation. The creative strategy is then evaluated in terms of the Euclidean distance between the actual and the ideal.

Following the logic of the Foote, Cone & Belding (FCB) Grid, figure 1 defines advertising situations in terms of the type of consumer decision making and the level of involvement likely to be evoked by a particular kind of product. Each product is given an involvement score based on consumer responses to a three-item scale:

- o Very important/unimportant decision
- o Lot/little to lose if you choose the wrong brand
- o Decision requires a lot of/little thought

The think/feel score is obtained from a five-item scale:

- o Decision is/Is not rational
- o Decision is/is not based mainly on functional facts
- o Decision is/is not based on a lot of feeling
- o Decision does/does not express ones personality
- o Decision is/is not based on looks, taste, touch, smell, or sound (sensory effects).

Given these scales, the game designer has only to establish a set of coordinates. A scale of -5 to +5 is convenient. On this scale, a headache/cold remedy, a moderately uninvolved, logical decision, might be represented by the coordinates (-3,-1).

**FIGURE 1:  
A DECISION MODEL FOR SELECTING CREATIVE STRATEGIES**

		Type of Consumer Decision Making	
		Thinking	Feeling
Level of Message Involvement	Hi	Utilitarian Knowledge-oriented (consistency) (1)	Ego-defensive (2)
	Low	Knowledge-oriented (stereotyping) (3)	Value-expressive (4)

Figure 1 also identifies the creatives strategy that are most appropriate for each cell of the grid. Utilitarian/consistency, ego-defensive, value expressive, and stereotyping appeals address cells 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the grid, respectively. If the grid dimensions run from -5 to + 5, then a pure ego-defensive strategy would have a value of (5,5). Consistent with the grid, Table 1 provides a set of scales along which each function may be rated from 1 to 5, reflecting the degree to which they describe the creative strategy contained in the ad. For instance, a rating of 2 on one of the utilitarian scales would receive a rating of (-2, +2). The actual values may be estimated either by requiring students to indicate the degree to which their creative strategy will emphasize each of the various functional appeals or by having the game administrator review actual ads and assign strategy values to table one using her or his own judgment.

**TABLE 1: A CREATIVE STRATEGY EVALUATION SHEET**

Indicate the degree to which your advertising will incorporate each of the following types of appeal:

**Utilitarian Appeals:**

The advertisement shows how the product or its attributes address needs that are not currently being satisfied for target market members.

Very much \_\_\_:\_\_\_:\_\_\_:\_\_\_:\_\_\_ Not at all

The advertising shows how the product or its attributes might merit rising expectations, delivering a new level of satisfaction that target market members didn't know was possible.

Very much \_\_\_:\_\_\_:\_\_\_:\_\_\_:\_\_\_ Not at all

**Ego-Defensive Appeals:**

The advertisement provides a threatening cue to target market members and then offers a product or attribute as an answer to the threat.

Very much \_\_\_:\_\_\_:\_\_\_:\_\_\_:\_\_\_ Not at all

The advertisement provides support to remove threats that inhibit the expression of a desired attitude toward the product or attribute.

Very much \_\_\_:\_\_\_:\_\_\_:\_\_\_:\_\_\_ Not at all

The advertisement provides an authority figure to remove the threat of having to take responsibility for one's own decisions regarding the product or attribute.

Very much \_\_\_:\_\_\_:\_\_\_:\_\_\_:\_\_\_ Not at all

The advertisement establishes the product or attribute as a symbolic outlet for the psychic energy trapped by repressed impulses.

Very much \_\_\_:\_\_\_:\_\_\_:\_\_\_:\_\_\_ Not at all

**Value-Expressive Appeals:**

The advertisement seeks to establish the product or attribute as a symbol of values that characterize target market members' actual self-image.

Very much \_\_\_:\_\_\_:\_\_\_:\_\_\_:\_\_\_ Not at all

The advertisement seeks to establish the product or attribute as a symbol of values that characterize target market members' ideal self-image.

Very much \_\_\_:\_\_\_:\_\_\_:\_\_\_:\_\_\_ Not at all

**Knowledge-Oriented Appeals:**

The advertisement points out inconsistencies in target market attitudes in order to stimulate a change in favor of the product or attribute.

Very much \_\_\_:\_\_\_:\_\_\_:\_\_\_:\_\_\_ Not at all

The advertisement seeks to stereotype a product or attributes in a way that will evoke a positive attitude.

Very much \_\_\_:\_\_\_:\_\_\_:\_\_\_:\_\_\_ Not at all

The coordinates for a given strategy may be derived by assuming that one attitude function will predominate in each cell, thus giving it a unique cell score. The value of cell 1 would be the highest utilitarian or knowledge-oriented (consistency) scores, cell 2 the highest ego-defensive score, cell 3 the knowledge-oriented (stereotyping) score find cell 4 the highest value-expressive score. The X-coordinate would be the sum of the X-coordinates for each of the cells. The V-coordinate would be the sum of the Y-coordinates.

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