



Book Review

By

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Title of the Book:

Art of Advertising

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Abstract: *An understanding of how advertising works needs to be cautioned by an appreciation of the contradictions and complexity inherent in this marketing communication activity. Understanding the scene behind advertising, its rich assortment of attitudes, emotions, information, perceptions and behavioural patterns has been a challenge to many authors, marketing researchers and professionals and therefore requires further examination. This work gives an intensive review of the book titled Art of Advertising, by Arun Mahapatra. The purpose of this text is to inform readers how the domain of advertising figures in the logistics of business expansion. The main weakness of the book is its failure to present world-class and local practical case studies, exhibits illustrations, checkpoint questions, and synopsis which assures continuity and reinforcement of the concepts covered in each chapter. Nevertheless, Art of Advertising is a very good resource book for marketing professors and university students and universities pursuing business studies, marketing, and entrepreneurship programmes. It is also an important text for operators in the advertising industry. The book will also be useful to media and advertising agencies in developing countries like Tanzania. Marketing researchers may also benefit from the concepts and gaps identified in the text as they opened up ideas for further research in advertising and consumer research. Furthermore, imminent improvements are recommended to give this book a more outstanding role towards this highly important subject in this era of digital advertising.*

Key words: *Advertising, Art, branding, and advertising industry*

1. Synopsis of the Book and Reflections

Arun Mahapatra (Ph.D.), is an eminent scholar with more than twenty years of experience in the field of management. Dr. Mahapatra is a management consultant based in Lucknow Uttar Pradesh India, specialising in marketing and organisation management. In his book, Art of Advertising, Arun Mahapatra, aims to enable readers to gain an understanding of how the world of advertising figures in the logistics of business expansion and strengthen an insight of the techniques and rules of advertising. This book encompasses a preface, ten chapters, and biography. The book has been designed as a reference text which seeks out to inform readers mainly students in higher learning institutions, owner-managers of business ventures, and business communities on the various facets which comprise the art of advertising. It also guides them on the prerequisites

of prosperous undertakings in the advertising industry in the dynamic business environment characterized by increasingly intense competition and struggle.

Chapter one sets forth the general introduction to advertising and it gives its originality from a Latin word “advertire” which means “to turn to”. It defines advertising as a paid non-personal communication from an identified sponsor using mass media to persuade or influence an audience. The origin and growth of advertising are also given whereas a phenomenon that has been in existence from the town criers who sold their goods through shouting in 1450AD to the printing press invention in 1477, all the way to periodical advertising in 17th century and its great expansion in 19th century which led to the development of creative advertisements.



The invention of television (TV) as a powerful medium of advertising in the 20th century, internet-based advertisement which ventured in the 21st century, and guerrilla marketing are also part of this development (p.5-7). The salient features of advertising are also discussed followed by its functions which according to Mahapatra they are viewed in two major ways: (i) advertising as a tool of marketing (i.e. a tool for selling the products, ideas, and services of the advertiser) and (ii) advertising as a means of communication and persuasion (i.e. present and promotes the ideas, goods, and services of the advertiser) (p2-5). The chapter also covers the types and classifications of advertisements, reasons for, and the importance of advertising.

In chapter two, the author introduces the concept of branding it covers the benefits of branding to buyers and sellers. Mahapatra also presents the six characteristics of a good brand name, generic usage of brand names, and the relevance of brand in building and maintaining a strong and positive national identity. Brand strategies and decisions (i.e. line extensions, brand extensions, multiple brands, and new brands) are also part of the key deliverables of chapter two. In the third chapter, Mahapatra introduces the ethics of advertising. The chapter gives details of ethical and moral principles, codes for commercial advertising, advertising standards council of India as well as advertising and children. The arguments in this chapter are focusing on the indirect and powerful impact of advertising on the society through the media, and therefore the need for advertisers to know the principles of the moral order and apply them faithfully while communicating their offerings to the target audience.

In chapter four, is on “direct mail advertising,” one of the book’s most interesting chapters. Mahapatra expands upon his argument, quoting a paradigm shift towards direct mail as one of the least expensive ways to advertise organisational offerings. Design, use advantages and disadvantages of direct mail marketing, Personalised uniform resource locator (URLs), business to business (B2B) mailings, and ways of writing subheads for direct mail are also very significant parts of this chapter. Chapter five presents the context and relevance of advertising on TV channels. It gives details of television advertising pros and cons and ways towards an effective TV commercial. Chapter six is on advertising on the radio. It gives details of creating great radio ads, direct response radio advertising, advertising strategy, and creative development. The main debates in this chapter are focusing on advertising planning, budgeting, costs, and wider audiences.

Chapter seven presents the meaning and modalities of online advertising over the World Wide Web, Benefits of online advertising, purchasing variations, ethical issues in online marketing, use of website to advertise one's business. At the same time, this chapter also acknowledges some recent developments in advertising as it stresses on how to design a podcast ad and Cost-per-action (CPA)-based web advertising, common mistakes in internet advertising, and tips on how to avoid them (p.122-124).

Chapter eight revisits key issues in small business advertising. It shows the important role played by advertising in a successful small business venture. Mahapatra in this chapter gives a detailed description of media formats, promotions, and advertising ideas for small businesses. In recognition of how smallness of an enterprise affects its advertising programme, the author managed to show a link between the advertising budget and the six laws of advertising (p.129-130).

In chapter nine, an interesting description of covert advertising is given. According to Mahapatra, this includes a range of different marketing tactics that don't announce themselves as advertising. This takes the form of product placement in films, celebrity endorsement of big-name brands, as well as sponsorships of sporting events. The chapter further describes advertising as a sneakier and is cheap as opposed to overt advertising which is blatant advertising found in newspapers, magazines, billboards, leaflets, on TV, and in films. The chapter winds up with an intensive description of viral and guerrilla marketing strategies. The final chapter of the book reexamines the scope of advertising in India. It documents an interesting growth trend of the advertising industry and the emerging of the advertising agencies in India. Advertising strategies, regulations, censorship, and the scope of advertising are also forming a very significant part of the discussion in this closing chapter.

2. Critical Evaluation and Discussions of the Book

Art of Advertising is a text book which gives a guide to successful performance in the advertising industry which is in a very competitive business environment. It introduces students to the essence of advertising, branding, ethics of advertising, use of direct mail advertising. It also orients learners to advertising on TV, radio internet. Furthermore, covert advertising, small business advertising, and scope of advertising in India are given. Despite some of its chapters focusing on India's context, the book is of immediate relevance to Tanzanian students, lecturers, marketers and other business operators.

The book discusses the functions of advertising as a tool for marketing and as a means of communication. This gives the reflections on how advertising can be used as a tool for selling and promoting products ideas and services of either identified sponsor or advertiser (p.4). In this book, the author only gives details of the consumers in general (p.25) without classifying them and their markets. It is the opinion of this review that the author should have balanced between the two sides by giving details of the role advertising plays in both consumer and business-to-business markets as they form a very significant component of the market. Likewise, the author ought to have presented and discussed cinema advertising which according to Dutta (2012) and Superbrands (2009) is a significant part of the filmed entertainment sector as it offers advertisers with a wide range of attractive technologies that are not available elsewhere in the same combination.



This, therefore, made cinema advertising to have been adopted and have appeared in the recent films and commercials by famous companies like *L'Oreal* and *Volkswagen's yellow beetle*, *Barista Lavazza Espresso Bars*.

Mahapatra would have also discussed the conventional outdoor advertising which is also called Out-of-home (OOH) media. OOH is latent with a strong impact on human brains and sways our brand perception on a daily basis (Dutta, 2012). OOH use of publicly displayed billboards, digital billboards, poster, panel, banner, flyer, and message behind a truck to communicate organisational offerings to the consumers (Obonyo, 2019). The discussion on OOH would have added value to this book as OOH are more than just billboards and kiosks now, there is a lot of technology, art, and skills involved in the media (Joshi, 2009). On a similar note, the author should have also give details of the paradigm shift to the digital OOH and transit OOH which are now used across the world. The common examples of transit OOH include GO WITH GOOD HEALTH, CASTROL OIL-CRB MINI TRUCKS, and SNAPDEAL.COM in India; as well as the likes of CocaCola, Sportpesa, and BetIn with City Hoppas in Nairobi Kenya, and NMB with DART in Dar es Salaam Tanzania.

Mahapatra considers the benefits of online advertising (p.107). He viewed them in terms of immediate publishing of information, its wide coverage, easy customisation of advertisements, and relativity of payment methods and audience response. Despite the relevance of online advertising, this book does not discuss some of the effective ways of online advertising like the use of banner ads, digital videos, and sponsored links. The book too did not give details of Classified ads. This is against Singh (2009), who identified that it is imperative to note that Classified ads dominate the online ad industry with 48 percent market share and search-based advertising has a 24 per cent share.

The author too gives details of the relevance of branding in advertising, the characteristics of a good brand name and generic usage of brand names. However, the book in its chapter two did not reflect the increasing trend of using celebrities in brand advertising. It is very important to note that, the use of celebrities is among the very important factor impacting brands. One should note that the use of top celebrities to reinforce brand image, the image of the celebrity endorsing the brand has to be in line with the characteristics of the brand the organisation needs to communicate to the customers (Dutta, 2012). Advertisements with celebrities as brand ambassadors are said to greatly influence purchase behaviour, especially among the younger generation. Arguing along the similar line Sathyanarayana, *et. al.*, (2019) argues that consumers are attracted by celebrity-endorsed advertisements from the fact that celebrities have knowledge about the brand, physical attractiveness, with stylish clothes, and have an elegant presence. This, therefore, drives marketers into injecting considerable amounts on celebrities to push their products and services into the markets.

Another critical drawback of the *Art of Advertising* is its oversights in detailing the advertising and media selection. It should be noted that while selecting media one should look at its consumption habits. An understanding of the consumer's media consumption habits helps when deciding which media to choose when planning for advertising. Again, brand managers can also use a combination of the various media options to reach their target audience effectively and efficiently, reinforce brand awareness and recall by the target audience and become the largest selling brand(s)¹.

Social networking sites such as Facebook (2.23 billion MAUs), YouTube (1.9 billion MAUs), WhatsApp (1.5 billion MAUs²), Messenger (1.3 billion MAUs), WeChat (1.06 billion MAUs), Instagram (1 billion MAUs), Tumblr (642 million MUVs³), QZone (632 million MAUs), Twitter (335 million MAUs), and LinkedIn (294 million MAUs) (Lua, 2019) are gaining popularity as they connect people across geographical boundaries and time. They provide a wealth of personal information about customers online and can be used effectively by marketers to finetune and maximize their offerings and brand reach through engaging with the right customers. Social networks such as Instagram, and YouTube, for example, allow marketers to upload videos and ads about their products and services, and therefore increasingly becoming popular among onlineers. However, in this book, there are few to no illustrative examples of the use of social media in advertising products and services. Perhaps more importantly, featuring many social network advertisements as illustrative examples would make this book sound better for students, lecturers, and other readers in the industry.

3. Endorsements, Weaknesses, and Strength of the Book

The main weakness of the book is its failure to present world-class and local practical case studies, exhibits illustrations, checkpoint questions, and synopsis which assures continuity and reinforcement of the concepts coved in each chapter. Nonetheless, *Art of Advertising* is still valid and a good resource book for marketing students and their lecturers in universities especially those pursuing Business Management, Marketing, and Entrepreneurship courses. It is also an important resource book for owners of businesses from multinational companies to small scale operators. The book will also be used by media and advertising agencies in developing countries like Tanzania. Marketing researchers may also benefit from this book in the sense that, examples, concepts, and gaps identified may have opened up ideas for further research in advertising and consumer research.

¹ Advertising Nirma (Superbrands, 2009).

² MAUs stands for Monthly Active Users (Lua, 2019)

³ MUVs stands for Monthly Unique Visitors (Lua, 2019)



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