

**AMBIENT MEDIA**

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Today, together with the increasing of the role of marketing, the role of marketing communications has also become very important. Indeed, effective communications with consumers are key factors of the success in any organization.

Enterprises engaged in various activities, from small retailers to large manufacturers, as well as non-commercial organizations (educational, medical, churches, museums and etc.) are constantly promoting their activities to the customers and clients. In order to do that, companies should use several strategies.

1) They need to inform prospective customers about their product, services, sales conditions;

2) They must convince a buyer to give preference to their products and brands, to buy in certain stores.

3) They need to make a buyer act because consumer's behavior is directed to those that the market offers currently. The purchasing should not be put off for the future.

These purposes are achieved through advertising.

If you want consumers to know about your company and your new product, you should inform them about it. In other words a lot of ways of products promotion should be involved. The program of promotion includes different ways of communication with clients: advertising, personal sales, publicity, etc.

Speaking about the ways of product promotion, it is necessary to determine the role which these methods play in the structure of marketing. These methods must be well structured and correspond to the type of products we sell because the main functions of promotion are to stimulate customer's demand and improve the company's image. Moreover, it is important to know, who develops and organizes an advertising campaign, i.e. the company's employees or hired professionals form a special agency.

Being a tool of the product and service promotion, advertising promotes products and creates a positive company image to customers.

Today it is quite evident that advertising is an essential tool for product promotion in the market. However, if a company wants customers to be interested in its product, it should understand that the use of only standard advertising will be not enough. People have been accustomed to ignore the most amount of the advertising information spilt from all sources. Moreover, a typical advertising often irritates potential customers. Few of us are glad to watch a TV commercial four times for an hour while watching a show or build up for the aesthetic, indescribable pleasure, which can be got only by the contemplation of the billboard. It is irrationally. That is the case when innovative technology in advertising area can appear and be offered to us. We mean ambient media.

Ambient media is an allocation of information in unexpected or unusual places, as a rule in urban or office environment. What does it mean and how to characterize this phenomenon, experts argue until now. Even an unambiguous definition of the term does not exist yet. For example, in Russia, ambient media is also called non-traditional or non-standard advertising.

The term ambient was firstly used in relation to advertising and media in the UK in the 90s of the XX century. It is associated with advertising, which awaits the consumer in the most unexpected places: on the back of the airline and rail tickets, at the bottom of a golf hole, on a harness in the subway cars, on the knob of a supermarket trolley. In other words, ambient-advertising surprises us and creates a good mood. The main advantage of ambient media is that it is more noticeable than a standard advertising, which can be too familiar and annoying for potential consumer.

In Europe and the USA ambient media is one of the most advanced and the quickly developing areas of advertising, investments in this area are constantly increasing. It should be pointed out that from 1997 to 2001, investments in non-traditional media in the UK had increased from € 17.4 million to € 100 million. By the end of 2002 this figure rose by 10%. But today in Russia, according to the results of a marketing survey, tools of ambient media are used only by very developed companies, which invest in it no more than 5-10% of their advertising budgets. However, it is important to understand that volume of sales and respectively, manufacturer's profit depend on effective advertising policy. Nowadays interesting, entertaining advertising is a profitable investment.

Now we should return to the peculiarities of ambient media. Its main difference from a standard advertising is also a fact that there is a harmonious introduction of advertising into the environment by using environmental elements as media advertising rather than the introduction of advertising mediums themselves. Consequently advertising media is an independent element of the environment.

This kind of advertising is available in places where people always look at and where they do not exactly expect to see it. In this case, the advertising should not irritate and shock, but it has to be a pleasant surprise for the viewer. Absolutely any object can be a tool of the ambient media: flower beds, the pool bottom and the walls of a building, hairstyles and even animals, sky, escalators, benches, and the list can be endless.

Creative ambient media attracts passers' attention. This kind of advertising makes us smile, admiring with its uncommonness.

Another advantage of ambient media is its qualitative coverage of audience rather than quantitative one, so the effectiveness of this advertising method is much higher than many standard methods.

Unfortunately, all of these characteristics sometimes make Ambient Media a very expensive thing. Implementation of some ideas can cost a lot of money. Moreover, it is necessary to ask the city administration for the permission to place advertisements, but the decisions of authorities can be conservative. Nevertheless, results are worth a lot of efforts.

Dealing with such kind of promotion, companies should clearly understand that an idea works only if it is original. Strange and obsolete ideas of a product promotion can hardly ever bring any profit.

In addition, the disadvantage of ambient media is the fact that in spite of being entertaining and in most cases effective, the advertisement may provide consumers with too little information about the products which are offered.

Today we can present a plenty of examples of successful ambient media use. Adidas advertising during the World Cup in South Korea used unusual billboards with an image of a football field. It was a background for the players suspended on the belt and "played football" for an hour a day. In Germany, a well-known trademark Mr. Proper used a common crosswalk and made one of the strips much whiter than others were. This advertising gimmick was definitely noticed, because each passer-by while crossing the road looked down. For example, Red Bull used an unusual form of cars with a huge tin of drink on the trunk. These cars were moving around the city and there originality attracted people's attention. The other bright example of such advertising was given by the insurance company Bradesco Seguros

which used poles in the parking lot, which had traces of crashing cars. The advertisement demonstrates the benefits of insurance for cars. Once the Swiss firm IWC chose an original way of advertising for their new production, it was a modern model of watches. Belt loops in public transport looked like the watches. Bus passengers had an opportunity to push their hands through the loops and then to assess how effective these models having a leather bracelet are looked on the wrists.

The surveys conducted all over the world have shown that the audience appreciates ambient-campaigns not only for the creativity and ingenuity of the advertisement designers but also for the appropriate using of the environment.

People like when high-quality and well-placed advertising makes the urban landscape more attractive and diverse. This kind of promotion has received greater attention, people discuss it with each other. A standard advertising is relatively cheaper, but it brings smaller effect in today's society. That is why future is for ambient media.