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October 6, 2024

Nike Advertising Campaign

Selecting Nike's advertising campaign

The Nike campaign in the video "Am I a Bad Person?" is a perfect example of Nike's corporate philosophy and the company's continuous attempts to shatter advertising and commercial standards. This campaign puts critical questions about identity, individual success, and ethical standards before viewers. The video expresses an easily offended and almost threatening demeanor, using phrases such as "I think I'm better than everyone else" and "Am I a bad person?" At first, this new campaign might appear confusing or even brutal, but its goal is to help people set a spark within themselves. For years, Nike has made management decisions that many people consider controversial. These decisions revolve around the company's identity, its market strength, and its ability to innovate. And, in this case, what may appear to be almost childlike expressions have given its audience the impression that the commercial message is unique and distinct from any other.

Supporting Brand Loyalty through Emotional Connection

This campaign, like many of Nike's previous marketing campaigns, aims to move its audiences. The advertisement explores the viewers' self-identity, their relationship with power, and their obsession with questions such as "Am I a bad person?" and "Does that make me a bad person?" This emotional appeal strategy is effective in the advertisement because it mutually forms a relationship between a customer and the product. According to Thomson et al. (2005), emotional connection occurs when the customer develops an affection towards a particular brand

since it represents their values or goals. Nike does a fantastic job linking this to the concept by associating their brand with introspection and self-improvement. As a result, the advertisement fosters brand loyalty by portraying Nike as a brand that understands athletes' psychological and emotional challenges, as well as their aspirations and dreams.

Identity and Self-Perception

Nike's campaign heavily focuses on identity and self-perception. Nike challenges viewers to ask themselves, "Am I morally deficient?" Nike associates their brand with values of strength, aspiration, and ethical integrity. Most athletes and self-motivated people define themselves by their performance and their ability to endure more physical and mental challenges. Therefore, this advertisement encourages the target audience to put their emotions aside in order to achieve success. Rather than directly telling people that it is beneficial to be selfish or to crave power, the campaign shows that individuals must make difficult decisions to achieve their goals. This form of identity marketing is extremely powerful since it enables consumers to identify with the products. According to Escalas and Bettman (2005), people use brands as a means of self-definition, emphasizing the importance of brand loyalty when a product mirrors a consumer's self-perception or ideal self-perception. Nike's campaign effectively instills in people the 'Just Do It' principal which is now synonymous with overcoming physical and mental limitations. At the same time, Nike positions itself as a brand aware of these internal battles, establishing an emotional connection with its client base, including newcomers and former customers.

Inclusivity and Universal Appeal

Although the advertisement may appear confrontational, Nike's messaging continues to be inclusive. Targeted to elite achievers, the questions presented are relatable to all individuals. The reader will encounter feelings familiar to all humans: self-doubt, ambition, and the urge to conquer one's weaknesses. This universality remains one of Nike's biggest strengths in building brand loyalty. Nike also ensures that the message it conveys to the massive public is central and relevant to many people.

Nike has been at the forefront of addressing issues about the product's universal appeal. Previously, their campaigns included a range of athletes that cut across race, gender, and culture. That was necessary for the brand to present their products as if they were for everyone and not just the elite. Nike's target consumers have as much diversity as the range of athletes its campaigns have featured. In today's marketplace, to cultivate a customer base that is as inclusive as its featured athletes, a brand has to compete on another level not just with its products, but also imaginatively, socially, and politically (Khamis, Ang, & Welling, 2017). Nike's ability to develop campaigns that include everyone, while they continue to foster elite performances, is one of the factors that has kept Nike competitive in the market.

Reinforcement of "Just Do It"

Nike's popular tagline 'Just Do It' does not appear anywhere in the advertisement but lurks in the periphery. The ad presents questions that promote action as the sole way to overcome self-doubt. This aligns with the company's prevalent 'Just Do It' attitude. According to the ad's perspective, if a person can get past self-imposed or societal obstacles that prevent them from their true desires, they can achieve anything. The ad's psychological twist supports the idea that

anyone can get past negative attitudes, fears, and insecurities by *just doing* the things they are insecure, fearful, or negative about. A generalized reinforcement of the slogan indirectly is a beneficial strategy because it is adaptable while being consistent with the brand. It is therefore important to maintain consistency in the messages given to the targeted consumers in order to ensure that they are well informed about what to expect from a given brand (Keller, 2013). Nike has evolved its communication campaigns over time, but the primary philosophy of "Just Do It" remains consistent for every campaign to which consumers are loyal.

Assessing the Effectiveness of the Campaign

The Nike campaign is full of emotions and focuses on self-image to target a specific segment of people. The simple design amplification, along with the use of obscure question marks, ensures that the message is both signaled and meaningful. Thus, the ad is based on harrowing feelings of identity and an inner spectacle of gaining a foothold, making it relatable to a broad audience despite the obvious reference to athletic types. Nonetheless, there are some potential risks to this campaign strategy. The loud and unapologetic propositions and brand attitude may repel some consumer groups, who are more influenced by positive appeals. Nike has always been on the cutting edge of controversy in its commercials; yet this advertisement's dark, inward focus may alienate potential Nike customers ill-prepared for the company's offbeat sensibilities.

Recommendations for Improvement

In my opinion, the campaign's overall impact is overwhelming, and I have a few suggestions for improvement that could be considered. The first and most important suggestion would be to clearly define the campaign theme. The problem with using controversial questions

is that, despite actively engaging the audience, they can be better connected to Nike's brand values and products. An overlaid text or a voice-over at the end, linking back to the ad and Nike's core message of inclusiveness and defeating the odds instantly, would clarify the message for everyone. Another suggestion is to increase the visibility of the campaign. The ad does reach its intended market of people who are independent, self-starters, and at times, self-absorbed. However, the ad's clinical and somewhat aggressive tone can be offensive to some. Presenting a portion of inspiration with an invitation to struggle, may reach a wider audience with a completely different tone.

Conclusion

Overall, Nike's "Am I a Bad Person?" campaign is an effective one. It works because it uses both a bold, eye-catching design and an astonishingly deep, rewarding message. On the surface, the message is one of direct inspiration, an encouragement to the viewer to perform a thought experiment involving their own worth: "Am I a bad person for wanting to look like the perfectly photoshopped people I see?" The answer of course is no. In true Nike fashion, they continue to meet all the criteria of a globally successful brand as they strive to exceed expectations and nourish the appeal to those aspiring for more in life.

References

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