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GENESIS AND HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF ADVERTISING

Nowadays advertising has become an unalienable part of everyday life. It has created the informational environment that penetrates into each and every aspect of human society existence. Advertising has developed into the complex and multifaceted phenomenon which is extensively studied by different scientists: economists, marketers, linguists, sociologists, psychologists etc. It is noteworthy that different scholars offer different definitions of this notion from the perspective of their scientific expertise. Thus, A. Lebedev states that “in its simplest form advertising is a certain message about goods or services which is spread by numerous productive, trade or financial companies with the help of advertising agencies, mass media with the view to producing an impact on the potential consumer” (1). B.Semenov adds that “advertising is a linking element of the market that distributes information about the goods availability, conditions of their acquisition and consumption”(2). R. Mokshantsev emphasizes financial aspects of advertising business: “...it is purposeful information about goods, services or their producers that has been paid for and spread by means of an effective channel”(3). Representatives of socio-psychological approach focus on the communicative functions of advertising and define it as “a form of communication that attempts to translate the quality of goods and services into the language of the consumer’s needs and demands”(4).

From the viewpoint of communicative linguistics, advertising is “a branch of mass communication where informative, expressive and suggestive texts are created and spread. They are addressed to groups of people with the aim of forcing them to make the expected choice or provoking them to act in a certain way” (5).

To sum up the above-mentioned definitions and approaches, advertising is investigated in terms of its purpose, functions and role in the life of society. Hence, advertising aims at promotion of a product or a service, a brand or the producer’s name, at attracting the consumer’s attention and forming the consumer’s need in a particular commodity or service. The principal functions of advertising are: identification of the merchandise or its producer, promotion of goods, services and

ideas, informing buyers, forming their demand, formation of mass social consciousness and connection of advertisers with consumer public via informational channels.

However, it is impossible to conduct content-rich and substantial research into peculiarities of advertising without tracing its origin and historical development. Certain authors claim that advertising can be dated back to the prehistoric period of social development. The prototypes of the modern advertising images were rock and cave drawings, tattoos and ancient ornaments. Aksenova believes that first advertising messages and texts appeared in ancient Egypt, Rome and Greece (6). For example, Romans informed spectators about fights of gladiators while Phoenicians praised their goods. Nevertheless, advertising had more often than not fragmentary and random character. It was not systematic or legal in essence.

A real breakthrough in advertising development is associated with 1440 when Johann Guttenberg invented a printing press. This machine allowed to create the first forms of mass information, namely printed posters, brochures and newspaper advertisements. Some scholars agree that the very first advertising message appeared in 1477. It was the leaflet printed by William Kekston announcing the sale of a prayer book that was published by Kekston.

Initial newspaper adverts are referred to the XVI century. In 1622 the first English newspaper “Weekly News” began its circulation followed by the French “Gazett” in 1630. The newspaper as a source of up-to-date information acquired its brand name in Italy where the word “gazettas” meant brief advertising messages published in newspapers. Actually, “gazetta” originally stood for the coin of the smallest nomination - the price for publishing such messages. However, most researchers agree that it was in the USA of XVIII century that advertising business began to flourish. They consider that various attempts and events organized by English colonists with the view to persuade new volunteers to come and settle in America were, in fact, the first real advertising campaign. Though the dawn of advertising history may be viewed as somewhat chaotic, its further development surpassed all most daring expectations.

The success of advertising business could be accounted for by many factors. To begin with, American industry had soon become the leader in the processes of mechanization and mass manufacture which resulted in the production of surplus amount of goods, the reason to advertise extras. Secondly, construction of good roads allowed organizing merchandise delivery even to most distant settlements.

Thirdly, high level of literacy among the population provided for the growing demand in the number of newspapers and magazines.

In 1728 Benjamin Franklin, the founder of the “Pennsylvania Gazette” became the first person to use newspaper illustrations to reinforce the effect of adverts.

The period from 1840 till 1915 saw the advent of practically all most significant constituents of modern advertising business - national advertising, full-cycle advertising agency, merging of mass media and advertising, criticism of advertising and its defense. Since that time, in fact, nothing has changed in this sphere with the exception of technological means of advertising production. The most important result of this stage of advertising development is associated with the fact that advertising ceased to be an isolated phenomenon of society life and transformed into a social institute with the related forms, functions and means of public impact. After the World War I, a new stage of advertising development started “trade era”, advertising becoming commerce embodied in paper. Another hall mark of advertising history is connected with the invention of radio and appearance of radio advertising in the 1920s.

Since the 1930s, television advertising has expanded beyond all imaginable boundaries, has multiplied in many different forms and kinds. “Commercial” has become the sole sovereign of television realm and the merciless tyrant of TV viewers.

It is obvious that many specific properties of advertising as a means of commercial communication are rooted in its history of development. But one thing is certain - advertising has transformed into ubiquitous form of mass media and a powerful instrument of social, psychological and economic manipulation.

References:

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