

Decoding Promotional Messages

Decoding refers to how consumers will understand the marketing communication. In this activity, you need to determine what is the main message for the following promotional messages.

Keep in mind that most ads do not include a lot of copy (text), so they often have to draw conclusions or will use their existing perceptions

Promotional Examples

- A. In a magazine ad for designer jeans = "Look good for a change"
- B. On a sign in a chocolate shop = Spend more than \$30 and receive a free* gift (* Conditions apply)
- C. In a new beer TV commercial = "Like no beer you've ever tasted before!"
- D. On toothpaste packaging = "Great results for great teeth"
- E. On a poster for a new movie = "One of the best movies I've ever seen", Bill Jones, (a journalist for a small local newspaper)

Student Discussion Questions

1. For each of the above examples, highlight how the communication message could be interpreted in a positive manner.
2. Likewise, for the above examples, highlight how the message could be interpreted in a somewhat negative manner.
3. Given that marketing communication is often brief, because of the limited perceptual process of a consumer, do you think that the above communication messages will be most likely interpreted in a positive or negative way?
4. How important do you think it is to pre-test advertising messages before they go to market? Are there any disadvantages to pre-testing marketing communication materials?