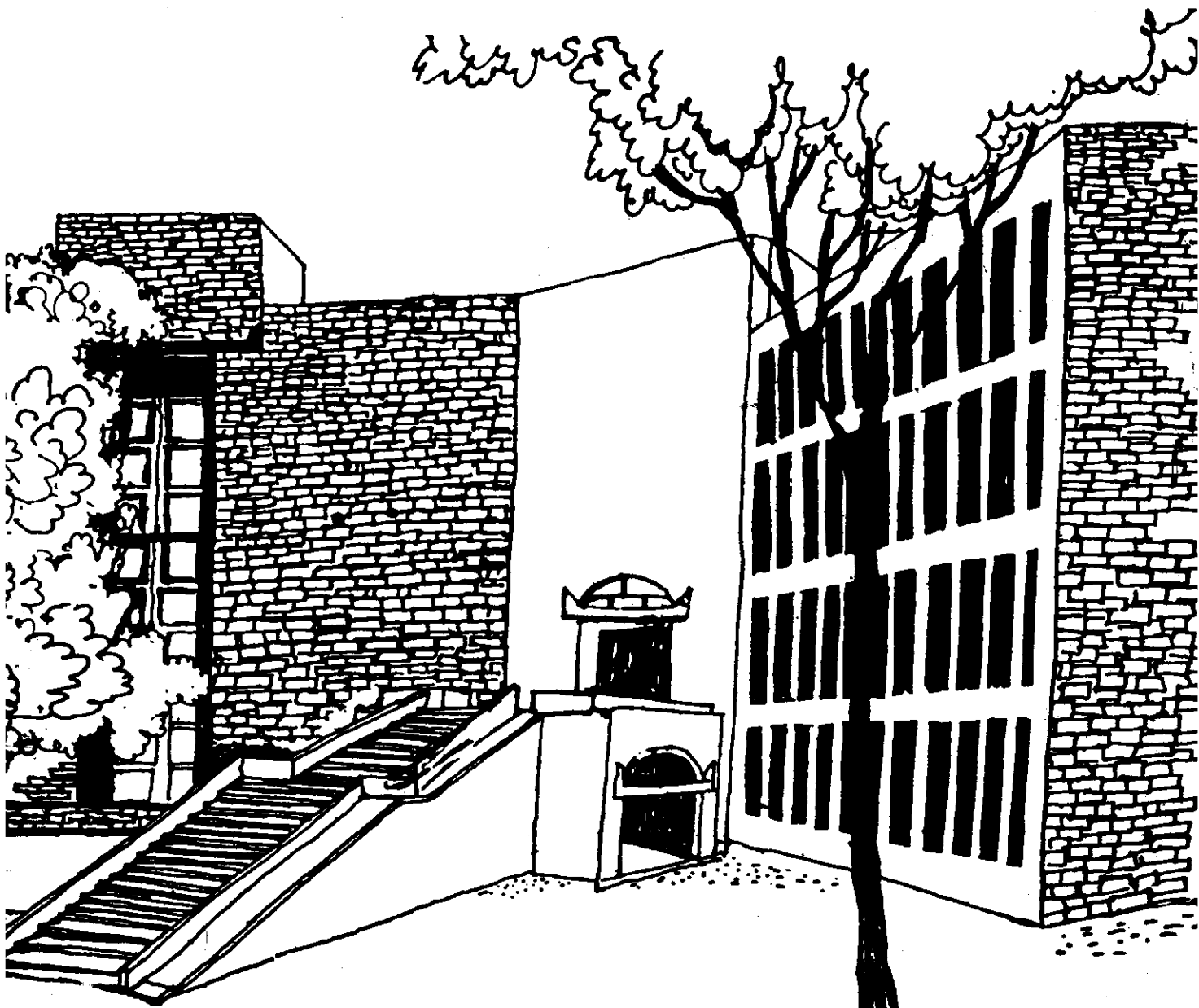# Working Paper

CREATIVE APPROACHES IN ADVERTISING IN INDIA
IN THE EARLY NINETIES - WHAT CRITERIA?

By

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Abstract

The paper developed while exploring the anomaly that the best adjudged creatives are not necessarily the best performers, despite uniformity in other marketing inputs. It examines (1)current trends in creative approaches, how do these fit in with the existing typologies and exhibit a blend resulting from adaptation to local culture, (2) the criteria used for assessing a creative and the missing links.

Findings indicate that image, execution and common touch are the most frequently used strategies. While judicious adaptation of creatives helps, transplants can only work for a few low involvement product, consumption of which is not influenced by culture. A set of criteria must take into account market competition, state of the buyer, PLC, product and media characteristics. Successful creatives have ensured that the target audience is able to realise 'identity with self',likes the ad and feels involved.

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Creative Approaches in Advertising in India in the Early Nineties - What Criteria?

Introduction

Opening up of the Indian economy has ushered in an era of marketing warfare. The market has turned into a battle field, where big, small, Indian and international players are pitched against one another. Today we have Pepsi at war with an Indian brand, Thums Up. In the personal product category in the women segment, Johnson & Johnson is fighting Procter & Gamble. And, virtually every company, big or small, Indian or international is present in the detergent market. Efforts to match the opponents on all aspects are visible in communication strategies. Each is investing heavily in advertising for shelf space and place in the consumer mind. In advertising war, creative reigns supreme, for though imitable it cannot be standardized.

Perceptible changes in creative approaches are taking place, more so in execution. Western models are in use for quite some time. Presenting brands in exotic locations is common amongst the premium brands of textiles, but is more frequent in multinational brands (Nescafe). Adaptations are also noticeable, (Ariel Johnson & Johnson). Lately, use of Hinglish (blend of English and Hindi) has been noticed in the food categories for India (Binnie Wafer), as also multinational brands (Pepsi). The market has clearly encouraged multitude of creative approaches.

The announcement of the best creative is an annual feature in the advertising world in India. Interestingly not all of these 1

the honour roll succeed in the market. (Brand Equity, Economic Times of India , 22nd Jan, '92). Some of these are pre-launch ads and some post-launch ads (new version). The question naturally is what sets the brand ticking? The creative or other marketing inputs? Given that all the above brands have other marketing inputs equal to or better than the market average, how do such judgments fail to forecast the success of a brand? All advertisers agree that an ad must ultimately lead to action. While action remains the ultimate objective, the crux seems to lie in understanding the route that leads to action. Role of creative becomes relevant here. If so, are the criteria applied for creatives appropriate? Do the criteria remain uniform across products, target audience, and markets?

Creativity, Creative Strategy and Criteria

Creativity has been defined in many ways (see Blasko and Mokwa, 1986). Quite a few of these descriptions are close to what Leo Burnett defined as, " the art of establishing new and meaningful relationships between previous unrelated things in a manner that is relevant, believable and in good taste". A further elaboration has been provided by Blasko and Mokwa (1986). According to them "in advertising a creative individual must produce (in an environment of constraint and pressure) a concept, theme, advertisement or campaign that can break through the prospect's potential mental defenses and mesh the wheels of product attributes with that of consumer preference." This is more relevant to marketing and helps to lay down criteria for evolving a creative strategy.

A creative strategy as distinct from creativity is "a policy or guiding principle which specifies the general nature and character of messages to be designed. Strategy states the means selected to achieve the desired audience effect over the term of the campaign" (Frazer, 1983).

A strategy must evolve from certain considerations, guidelines, or criteria. A set of criteria lays down the rules of the game. To advertisers creative strategy and the underlying criteria are more relevant . This study examines these two aspects.

1. Creative Approaches/Strategies

The typologies have been reproduced after review (Exhibit - I). There are overlaps in various approaches.

The most well known approaches are Image (Ogilvy), USP (Reeves), Execution (Bernbach), and Common touch (Burnett). Some of the others are story line, problem solution (See Aaker and Myers, 1986). Frazer (1983) examined appropriateness of creatives keeping in mind the market conditions and the likely competitive implications. Ogilvy has provided mediawise strategies (1985). Rossiter and Percy (1987) gave informational (in case of negative motivation towards purchase) and transformational (in case of positive motivation towards purchase) strategies for high and low involvement products. Vaughn(1986) suggested creative based on response hierarchy for products at different involvement levels. Improvements have been suggested by Rossiter and Percy (1991) on Vaughn's typology

where the state of the buyer has been taken into account viz., brand awareness and brand attitude. Blasko and Mokwa (1986) speak of the Janusian perspectives, suggesting possible implications for problem solving approaches.

A recent paper (Zandpour et al, 1992), on comparative analysis of French, Taiwanese, and U.S. TV commercials has adopted the approach of Simon (1971). Simon has included reward, namely obligation (free gift) and habit starting (sampling) amongst the creative categories. These are promotional strategies. The study also examines information content and execution form, which can be part of overall creative strategy. A contemporary study examining creative strategy in American and Japanese TV commercials (Ramprasad and Hasegawa 1992) has also reviewed the creative strategies of Vaughn, Simon, Frazer, and adopted from Laskey et al (1989). Both the studies indicated differences. which were significant amongst France, Taiwan, and America (Zandpour et al '92), making a case against standardisation.

2. Guidelines/Criteria

The creative must fit in with the overall communications strategy and marketing objective. It must take into consideration the market condition, the likely response of the target audience, and the PLC. It should keep in mind the product and the media characteristics. Media specific guidelines have been provided by Ogilvy (1985). He lays importance to media characteristics, product knowledge and emphasizes the importance of research on target consumer. Rossiter and Percy (1987) emphasize communication objective and take in explicitly the state of the

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audience (positive/negative attitude towards the product), and the product characteristics (high/low involving). Tactics have been suggested for different communication objective such as recall, recognition.*

Vaughn (1986) has categorized product type and the likely response hierarchy to suggest the creative strategies (informative for high involvement thinking product, affective for high involvement feeling product and so on). Further improvements on this have been suggested (Rossiter et al 1991) taking into account the state of the buyer viz., brand awareness and attitude. This has partly taken care of the PLC aspect though competitiveness of the market is not fully reflected in either of the approaches. Frazer takes in the reaction of both the consumer and the competitor while considering the competitive implication. Thus consideration of the state of audience, the response hierarchy, product involvement and also media characteristics have been taken into account implicitly or explicitly by one or the other set of criteria. Vaughn, Rossiter and Percy provide contextual background in suggesting a strategy and hence are more explicit.

While most of the above mentioned criteria stem from the marketer's needs, an independent set of measures from the point of the viewer's judgment has been developed (Haberland and Dacin, 1992 Exhibit V). This takes into account the

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*Guidelines for messages are also provided to achieve communication objectives, such as retention and conviction (see Engel et al, 1989).

communication objectives viz., interest arousal (involving, unique), persuasiveness (want to buy the product), curiosity (want to see it again).

A set of criteria has also been proposed in the Indian context taking in the views of the client and the agency (RSCG Survey, Brand Equity, Economic Times of India, 4.9.92, Exhibit IV). These, however, seem to be in isolation of the product market situation. The other common measures used to assess an ad are its ability to generate attention, interest, curiosity arousal, comprehension, compatibility, credibility, and persuasiveness. These tend to be general in nature. Clearly, competitiveness in the market, PLC, product type and media will have varied demands on the creative. The present study is an attempt to analyse creatives from these aspects.

Objectives

In the backdrop of the market scenario described earlier where advertising has become a major competitive tool, this paper attempts to explore -

i) the current trends in creative approaches: how do these fit in with the existing typologies or exhibit a blend resulting from adaptation to local culture?

ii) the criteria used for assessing a creative: Whether the criteria used for assessing a creative are appropriate, uniformly applicable? If not, what are the missing links? viz., communication objectives, message match with target audience and media.

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The first one would primarily be a descriptive analysis. The second would examine selected creatives in relation to brand performance and product/market characteristics. This would reflect on the appropriateness of the existing criteria and suggest possible improvements. The basic assumption would be that parity is maintained in all other marketing inputs, at least amongst the major competitors.

Methodology

(1) Understanding categorization or typology of the creative approaches.

a) Selection of the product categories

Selection of the product categories was a crucial exercise as this had a bearing on the creative. The sample included brands representing different market competition, PLC and buyers' state (awareness). The sample of 22 represented involvement levels[*] both in the feeling and the thinking categories, including sensitive and habit forming products. Only major brands were considered in order to maintain parity with respect to all other marketing inputs. Industrial products were not included as personal selling is the most important element in communication.

Selection of ads

Print: Original versions were retained where the ad size of the test sample was more or less equivalent ranging from

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[*] Involvement was measured initially on a sample of products using measures adopted from Zaichkowsky (1985) with some modifications.

quarter page to half page of a newspaper format.   It was ensured
that all the elements of the ad were legible and could be
codified.

TV: Prime time slots (30- 90 secs) were analysed .

As many as 200 ads (Print and TV) were examined with the number
of ads averaging to (9-10) for a product category, including
different versions of the same brand.

b) **Categorization/Typologies**

For initial categorization content analysis of a sample of
100 ads including those of the test products was carried
out by three judges. Exhibit-I formed the basic framework. A
large incidence of confusion due to overlapping occurred.   One
specific example was `demonstration' which could merely inform or
strongly convince.   Clear directives were given in brief to
classify this strategy. The other example was positioning
strategy.   Positioning as a separate category was difficult to
identify as any creative is a support to positioning implicitly
or explicitly. To minimize overlapping and retain exclusivity,
categories were defined.   Typologies that deviated from the
existing ones were renamed according to the responses in the
content analysis (See Appendix A for details).   The percent of
agreement between judges ranged from (80-85) percent. This was a
satisfactory figure (Kassarjian, 1977).   The following
categories were identified and defined and the brief for the

** Full page ads in journals, magazines measured nearly a quarter
   of the size in the newspaper format.

judges was modified with different tactics under each approach (Exhibit-II).

i) **Execution:** This follows the definition provided by Bernbach. The creative should be offbeat, novel, dramatic. In print it would be characterised by unusual use of contrast in colours, elements of the ad including visuals; as also use of non-verbal communication. The headlines could be anomalous, arousing curiosity. In TV, presentation could be bizarre, humorous dramatic, a blend of Western and Indian culture, or containing novelty in music/sound and delivery.

ii) **Image:** As defined by Ogilvy: Where predominant use of source and symbols has been made to project the product image through user class or establishing connection or association.

iii) **Common-touch:** As defined by Burnett: That which is not offbeat, but common and touches the viewer in terms of identity with self and familiarity with the scenario depicted in the ad.

iv) **Others:** This includes (a) affective, (b) informative and (c) transforming approaches.

(a) **Affective:** Follows the definition provided by Frazer. Is marked by absence of strong selling emphasis. Basically leads to receptivity of the message. Can also result in positive or negative reactions. The attitude is more towards the ad than to the associated objectives.

(b) **Informative:** Basically related to communication objectives in terms of attention, comprehension and recognition.

(c) **Transforming:** That which influences attitude and enhances

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conviction.

Both (b) and (c) are different from Informational and Transformational approaches defined by Rossiter and Percy.

A content analysis of the test ads of the selected product categories was then carried out. An intercoder reliability of 0.80 was obtained (Perreault et al, 1989).

Only spontaneous responses were noted. This was in view of the fact that the sequence of the effect of an ad is very complex and does not follow a set pattern. Thus a spontaneous, affective, positive response may subsequently change into a favourable attitude. This would be true if the person is left alone with the idea. In absence of an inherent bias or discounting factors, the final response over a period of time may turn into a favourable attitude.

(2) Criteria

The framework used for criteria were (i) FCB (Vaughn), (ii) Advertising tactics (Rossiter and Percy, 87), (iii) RSCG survey (client and agency guidelines in India) and (iv) the Viewers' judgment (Haberland and Dacin 1992).

As mentioned earlier various aspects have been looked into by one or the other criteria. Together these provide an overall perspective to give leads to creative strategy.

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*   This is true demonstration which could either be informative
    or transformative. Thus an initial response 'it merely
    demonstrates' (informative) can change into 'it induces me to
    try out' (transformative - affecting attitude, inducing
    behaviour).

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While creative must be situation specific (product, market, audience, media) certain ground rules may be uniformly applicable. To be able to judge the effectiveness of a set of criteria, performance of 5 award winning as well as 8 mature leading brands was examined. Clearly, conformity/non-conformity with the given criteria or guidelines would reflect on the efficiency of these guidelines. This helped to examine whether same principles applied across product-market. The creative typology along with key information relating to product type, PLC, market competition, media and target audience etc. (see Exhibits III and IV) were noted against a brand to assess the applicability of a strategy and to identify linkages.[*]

Creative typologies of these brands were obtained from content analysis. Viewers' judgments were taken from responses of the target audience, the user and the decider.

A sample of 20 respondents with even representation of both the sexes, was drawn from the research staff of a management institute. Ads of products, specific to the target audience, were shown; cigarettes to men, beauty soaps to women. Common products were toothpaste, soft drinks and T.V. Nearly 65% of the respondents were in the user/occasional user category.

Responses were noted and checked against the framework of Vaughn and Rossiter & Percy. To illustrate, a response, "The ad makes me try out, and then decide", has been categorised as 'do-learn-

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[*] Linkages — evolving from key information, such as communicatio objective, message match with target audience/media.

feel', whereas a response 'I would like to find out how it feels', categorised as 'do-feel-learn, or feel-do-learn' [satisfaction]. Similarly statements, such as 'like the way the benefit has been brought out', 'execution unique to the brand', (transformational, LIF) and 'benefit has been stated clearly and emphatically' was categorised (Informational, LIF). It was easier to code the responses for RSCG Survey as these matched with the statement. A separate questionnaire was administered for Haberland et al (See Exhibit V). Missing links, when creative failed to explain the performance were explored.

Findings:

1. Typologies (Table 1)

The content analysis of the different creatives in the Indian context exhibits a mix of approaches which seem to have resulted from an attempt to adapt to the local conditions. Table 1, summarizes the findings.

Image, execution and common touch have been used in varied degrees across all products. These do not differ conceptually from the existing typologies, except that the tactics or instruments have been different. Image is emphasized through international connection viz., collaboration, Western model, exotic background and international markets, unlike those in the Western countries. For high involvement rational buy, image dominates for both mature and new brands. Use of ' promise' has been made sparingly in competitive markets across FLC. The

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Table 1: Summary Table of Creative Typologies by Products

Product category	Creative Approaches
1. High Involvement (Thinking oriented: Car, carriers, 2-wheeler tyres, computers)	Image (technology, collaboration, international connection) dominates, followed by Execution (computer graphics demonstration), Common Touch (slice of life), and Transforming (U.S.P). Uniformly used for new launch ads across various markets.
2. High Involvement (Feeling: Textiles, major brands)	Image (celebrity symbols Western models, international touch) Common touch (slice of life), followed by Affection (self ego), mood creation - by visuals, non-verbal communication, and modalities, facial expressions in the print media, music to accentuate effect in TV.
3. High Involvement Personal/family product: (TV, Camera, musical system)	Image (celebrity, celebrity endorser, company name, collaboration) and Execution (computer graphics, uncommon character become a mnemonic) followed by informative approach and common touch (resonance). Comparatives are also found highlighting features for example TV, a mature brand in a mature product market.
4. Low Involvement Social consumption product, often impulse purchase product: [Soft drinks, food products (chocolates, biscuits) others (Shoe polish)	Execution (bizarre type, Western/international touch, use of Hinglish (English and Hindi combined), drama (animation) and Common Touch. Image and Transforming follow, where image is basically to achieve source identity and support positioning. Humour has been used by mature brands. Both adaptation and transplants exhibited.
5. Low Involvement Sensitive personal care product: skin care (adult, baby care), shampoo, soap, perfume (men & women)	This category shows nearly equal spread across Execution (demonstration), Image (international image), Common Touch (slice of movie), Affective (motivation) and Transforming (goal seeking and problem solving) Bias toward visual and music
6. Low Involvement thinking oriented (often habitual products: detergents, toothpaste, edible oil)	Execution (drama, animation, humour), and Transforming (problem solving, U.S.P., reason why, comparative) followed by Common Touch (slice of life), Affective (self ego). Tough competition in some products (detergents) makes attribute focused ads more common. Many brands use dramatic effects to bring out the major attribute/benefit. Same brand has adopted several approaches.
7. Low Involvement Feeling oriented Cigarette	Image (user status, through symbolic props) and Affective (self concept; social acceptance recognition) followed by Common Touch (slice of life).

Different brands from product groups were analysed against key information relating to market PLC, buyer state, etc (S Exhibits II and III). Some of the brands in categories 1,2 and 3 have little to differentiate on physical attribute (Frazer

Competition enhanced creative approaches as several approaches were adopted for a single brand. Some of these were so specific such as demonstration. Besides, as noted earlier demonstration could be dramatic (eg. Citra ,a soft drink). others it could be plain demonstration aiding comprehension as in the case of detergents. Again facial creams sho cleansing of dirt pores could be convincing while implicitly addressing goal seeking/problem solving situation. Hence same tactics achieves different effect depending on the product.

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trend is similar in feeling oriented products with emphasis on affective strategies. Refutational and conditional avoidance are absent. These can be forcefully used in industrial products, not covered by this study.

Execution takes over in low involvement products with variations in different categories. New ads tend to use computer graphics achieving dramatic effect and aiding comprehension. Bizarre execution is frequent for new brand in social products. Use of USP and comparative is common for rational buy, specially in a competitive market. One of the major competitive reactions to these is to offer newness or innovativeness to the existing product with addition of better properties to match or beat the new entries. It would appear that USP, though initially effective is not lasting. Execution and common touch are preferred options. Adaptation to local conditions is more prevalent for multinational brands with transplants in some cases (Johnson & Johnson baby products, Cherry Blossom shoe polish).

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Janusian approach was found to lend emphasis, but not in terms of problem solving. It would allay fears for products which has to match two conflicting attributes, such as "frozen" and "fresh". Though it did influence attitude (transforming) in low involvement product, the bias was toward informative.

2. Criteria

a. Sustenance and Creatives of Leading Brands - Mature PLC (Exhibit III):

The role of ads for mature brands would be primarily to reinforce and remind, besides trying to influence consumers of competing brands. Of the eight leading brands, two belonged to high involvement category namely TV and two-wheelers. The rest were low involvement, mostly in the personalised category. While these six brands were comparable in terms of other marketing inputs with respect to competition, the brands in the high category had an edge over competition. Bajaj, one of the earlier entrants in two-wheelers, established itself through after sales service. Onida, competing with other TV brands (with Japanese collaboration) achieved better trade support. Hence the market performance cannot be entirely attributable to advertising. Hence these two brands have not been dealt in detail but the major characteristics of the creative strategy had been noted as they continue to dominate in terms of the creatives.

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* Any brand with no change in the creative for 3 years or more has been considered.

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Interestingly both the products in the high involvement category do not show conformity to FCB [viz., learn-feel-do]. None claimed supremacy in terms of product attributes or technology. Onida TV uses a unique presenter, the demon. Visual of green reptile symbolises jealousy, reinforced through the copyline - 'owner's pride, neighbour's envy'. Uniqueness is achieved by associating with symbolic characters, which act as mnemonics. Of late, due to competition pressure, Onida has started stressing on benefits, while retaining the copyline and the presenter. Bajaj has been using affective appeal 'our own Bajaj' reflecting nationalism.

For the remaining products, visuals in the print media convey message through symbols. The copyline and the headline together deliver the key benefit while establishing an identity with the target audience. A short, cryptic copy or headline which acts as an anchor point and sums up the entire ad achieves a lasting effect. These are often catchy acting as powerful mnemonics. For ads in TV, the typical characteristics are - a) music or single sound effect which sets the mood, goes with the tone of the message and brand character, b) visual which does not stale or clash with the target audience/segment image. This was true for brands (Liril) that had little to differentiate amongst physical attributes (Frazer). According to Ogilvy if there is nothing to say, sing it.

Ads with high campaignability, achieving perfect identity with the target segment and supported by a strong copy line which reinforces the product attribute and positioning helps

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sustenance. Key idea is forcefully demonstrated. Picture tells
the message (Ogilvy). Being sketchy or inability to change
views have not inhibited generating affective responses, as borne
out by Wills Filter and Gold Flake. The effect can be
accentuated by the use of music in TV media as in the case of
Liril soap and Nirma detergent powder.

b. Creatives and Performance — Award Winners: (Exhibit IV)

Good ads good performance: The ads generally conform to the
guidelines/criteria and exhibit consistency of brand
character/image with respect to audience profile (Pepsi and
Citra). Basic message is delivered strongly and simply.
Execution is original, dramatic, opens with fire (Citra). There
is also good adaptation to local conditions where the major
attributes of the brand are brought out involving the target
audience in a story format. relevant to the social context
(Ariel). Rated as common has not inhibited the growth of the
brands where the ads have scored on `meaningful' and
`satisfying' (reinforcing) , specially amongst the users of the
brand.

Good ads bad performance: These are characterised by (i) Clash
of product image with target profile (Colgate Gel toothpaste),
(ii) Fuzzy positioning (Jaisalmer cigarette), and (iii) Gaps in
meeting some of the criteria arising from market competition and
viewers expectations. An ad must stand out in a crowded market.
In other words, it must **stop** the viewer. Ads that lost out in
performance were described as `not unique', `not imaginative'

(Jaisalmer). The ads must not only **stop** the target audience but also make him pause over the message. The message should state with clarity and emphasis either through execution or otherwise the unique or additional benefit. It should involve the audience to generate responses such as 'that is my brand', 'this is what I was looking for'. Both Colgate Gel and Jaisalmer failed on this count. Clearly an ad in a competitive market must **'stop'** and **'hold'** the audience. In a cigarette market the premium brands build up shares by cutting into the market of others. If Jaisalmer was to build up wresting from competition and through new custom, the product image as depicted must match the smoker profile of the competing brands and the potential segment. The missing link appears to be the identity of the symbolic character with the target audience. Support to position (quality cigarette?) is weak. In the case of Colgate Gel the ad is apparently targeted at the teenager group. The depicted profile would mismatch with the target segment unless the intended segment happens to be the youth segment. The depicted audience do not appear to be associated with the product in terms of selecting or deciding it, except in giving it an image. The key idea of freshness is overshadowed by a group of highly enjoying youngsters.

Being sketchy, less informative or failure to influence attitude were not inhibitors to success. It may be noted that nearly all the products were in the low involvement category, where thinking is not a precondition to trial. The processes are often non-cognitive.

In print, role of copy line, visual, and brand name appear to be significant, more so for new launch ads. In TV, music and visuals play similar role. The creative must succeed in achieving a favourable attitude (impressive visual, entertaining, good taste) towards the ad, as revealed from the viewers' judgment.

The Missing Links

The criteria/guidelines were useful in analysing creatives where one or the other became more relevant in a given product/ market situation. A higher consistency was noted for criteria set by Haberland and RSCG Survey. The guidelines by Frazer helped to indicate appropriateness, while those of Ogilvy explained the performance as well. Missing links were - identity of target audience/segment with the character in the ad, absence of a clinching head/copyline, weak support to position or basic message due to poor adaptation from a foreign ad (Jaisalmer) or competition (competing brands of tyres which are and not me-too brands). Jaisalmer failed to identify with the target segment while the various tyre brands claimed the same benefit becoming a copy or a 'different version of the competitors' ads. Finally overall confusion with respect to position, basic benefit or intended segment led to the failure (Colgate Gel).

A creative can ensure trial, if the above criteria could be examined against market details noted under key information (Exhibits-III,IV). The dimensions according to this study in order of importance came out to be a) target audience/segment

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* The order of importance would change with the type of products, PLC. The current sample was biased toward low involving products.

reaction to ad and source b) product market conditions and competitive reaction, and c) decision hierarchy. As any creative is a support to communication objective(s), it must evoke responses which can be linked to these objectives. Thus 'source identity' must elicit the response 'that is my brand', and d) preferably a sign, message, music - something which will stay with the viewer in the absence of the ad creating resonance, acting as mnemonic; and finally e) should be liked by the target audience. Thus the brand must score on some of these dimensions, measurable, preferably in terms of viewers' responses. Subsequent to this the product must perform for itself.

A new ad in order to be noticed, in a crowded market must be different either in delivery, message, visual or in overall effect. A post launch ad (including new version) may be reinforcing or a reminder. A pre or immediate launch ad of new brands suffering from identity gap may inhibit trial and subsequent growth of a brand. Yet another competing brand may through under the counter promotion block its trial and subsequent growth. Hence the measures for a pre launch or new ad must be on response hierarchy, from attention to trial. These would again depend on the product. To sum up, the old adage - 'STOP' (uniqueness), **HOLD** (involving) and SEND (makes you want to buy the product), seems to work specially for new launches. For mature brands this could be 'HOLD' or reinforcing (satisfying and meaningful).

Discussion and Conclusion

It was not possible to isolate the effect of media. It is known that TV has a pronounced effect on sensory responses. As most of the print ads are basically stills from TV ads, the analysis to that extent has not suffered. Responses may reflect the overall effect. Care was taken to use the dominating media. Product categories were decided on the basis of information available on the brand creatives and performance and hence were not exhaustive. This lent bias towards low involvement products. Responses towards the ad provided the base on which the content analysis as well as the criteria were judged. Only verbal responses were taken.

Since any mature brand draws its strength from core clientele which is loyal, the question may arise as to how advertising becomes critical for habit forming mature products. It may be noted that the set of brands also included products such as soaps, amenable to brand switching. The respondents were regular and occasional users.

Without hazarding generalization, it may be said that various creative strategies are evolving due to increase in competition specially in the low involvement products. Some indicate good adaptation, while others are poor imitations, and a few exhibit uniqueness in presentation. Advanced technology has encouraged computer graphics in TV thus playing down the role of creative. Computer graphics lend emphasis to the desired messages. However the role of creative still remains dominant in the print media.

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No one strategy can be singled out as the most appropriate in a given context. For the successful and the leading brands, strategies varied across common touch, image and execution. Nostalgia has been used with effect in both the high and the low involvement mature brands, while execution (computer graphics) is predominant in new brands. Trend seems to be towards execution with creative playing a subordinate role. Though not probed, branding matters both in helping to bolster image (Pepsi) and even in raising curiosity (not examined). Brand name can emphasise an attribute of the product. Effect of media is realised in the different components to be emphasized; colour, copyline for print; music, jingle for TV.

Sustenance of an ad depends clearly on whether the creative is in tune with the media or the product, but more significantly on whether the creative brings forth boldly and simply the core need or the key benefit, and establishes an identity with the target audience or segment. Bajaj ads, based on 'slice-of-life', portrays people from various walks of life, representing its segment and successfully brings home the message "our own Bajaj" without emphasizing on technology. It succeeds in achieving source identity and appealing to nationalism (national pride). This in turn becomes a reinforcer.

Adhoc borrowing and replication of creative strategy over product market situation may be risky. A creative may clash with the brand character or image or fail to identify itself with the

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intended segment. This seems to have happened in the case of Colgate Gel. This was also seen in the local adaptation of Pepsi Ad which failed to appeal to the consumers. Subsequent modifications with the use of Hinglish and depiction of 'slice of life', (young mod generation) helped. Jaisalmer Cigarette projecting masculinity and the local flavour (adoption from Marlboro Cigarette?) did not achieve the desired effect.[*] While most of the detergents rely on the demonstration route, the ad on Ariel takes the story route to bring out the cleansing and whitening property.

Transplants of creatives in low involvement products are possible, where universal appeals can be played up. This is done successfully with humour, emotion of mother for child (J&J), use of universal characters (Charlie Chaplin in Cherry Blossom) or use of cartoons (Fido-Dido-of Pepsi). Caution must be observed where culture becomes a dominating factor in adoption of a product such as food or clothing. These were not considered in the study.

The analysis of the various typologies reveal that it may not be possible to have an exclusive strategy and in fact the successful ones are often a skillful combination of at least two strategies

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[*] There are instances of adoption of parts of an ad, for example, an hoarding of The Illustrate Weekly Magazine reads — 'Whenever you don't see colour, think of us', which is a lift from Jenson and Nicholson "Whenever you see colour, think of us". There are also instances of lifting foreign copy and visuals. (Business Today, 7th October, 1992, p. 16). The ethics of such semi-plagiarism have not been examined in this study.

(eg. Bajaj combining 'slice of life' and 'affective appeal'). Copy line and brand name are critical to bolster and strengthen a message or a visual and offer scope for originality and creativity.

In summing up, it must be emphasized that setting up criteria to evaluate and predict success of a brand on the basis of creative is not an easy task. The impact of an ad is explained by a complex process of information processing, affective conditioning, and attitude towards ad. Viewing creative from these aspects would enrich the findings. This exercise is only the first step towards that endeavour.

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Exhibit - I: Summary of Creative Strategies that provided the basic framework

1 Simon	2 Ramaprasad, Hasegawa	3 Frazer	4 Others
nformation, Argument, Motivation ith psychological appeals, Repeated ssertion, command, Brand familiariation, Symbolic association, Inittion, Obligation, Habit-starting.	Information Strategy: Hyperbole, Pre-emptive, USP, Comparative. Transformational Strategy: Brand image, User image, Use Occasion	Generic, pre-emptive, U.S.P., Brand Image, Positioning, Resonance, Affective	Image (Ogilvy), USP (Reeves), Execution (Bernbach), and Common Touch (Burnett).
The last two are consumer promotion.			Story line, Problem solution, Chronology Special effects, Testimonial, Satire, spokesperson, Demonstration, Suspense, Slice-of-life, Analogy, Fantasy, Personality

1 Zandbour et al ('92) who have adopted the same alternatives for their study.

2 Ramaprasad et al ('92) have adapted from Laskey, Day and Crask (89). They have also examined creative typologies viz Vaughn ('86), Simon ('71), Frazer ('83).

3 Frazer ('83) has examined appropriateness of creatives against market conditions and also the likely competiti implications.

4 See Aaker and Myers ('86).

The most well-known approaches are Image (Ogilvy), USP (Reeves), Execution (Bernbach), and Common Touch (Burnett). Ogilvy has provided strategies media-wise. Rossiter and Percy ('87) provide guidelines for high and low involvement produc under informational and transformational strategies. Vaughn ('86) suggested creatives based on response hierarchy for produc at different involvement levels. Improvements on Vaughn's framework have been suggested by Rossiter et al '91 taking in account the state of the buyer viz., awareness and attitude. Blaskc and Mokwa '86 speak of the Janusian perspectiv suggesting possible implications for problem solving approach.

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Execution	Image	Common Touch	Others		
			Affective (Appeals, visual, music)	Informative Attention, Comprehension, Recognition	Transformative (Attitude Conviction)
- Western/Inter-national touch - Blending of language (use of Hinglish) - Animation - Fantasy - Story - Weird/bizarre execution - Cartoon/real characters/actors	Signs/symbols (Use of presenter testimonials) Use of celebrity (present and past) Use of personality/ character Use of inter-national image through - technology	Slice of life Slice of movie Resonance/ nostalgia Occasion	Use of appeals: pathos/ethos humour fear creating mood through visual/ name, symbols,	Signs analogy demonstration(1) hyperbole preemptive Janusian(2) One sided appeal, claims	- Rational - Comparative(3) - U.S.P. - Rational appeal - Refutation(3) - Argument (reason why)
- make product the hero - Computer Graphics - Analogy - Demonstration(1) - Drama - Teaser ads - Non-verbal Communication	- collaboration - export market - Western model - foreign/exotic background		music, tone (eg. Good Morning) Conditional(3) avoidance/ regret route appeals to motivation/ego self-concept		- Command(3) - Source identity - 2-sided appeal - promise - demonstration(1) - endorser (expert - problem solving - goal seeking (reward)

(1) Demonstration with dramatic effect was classified as Execution. Demonstration which merely explained, aid comprehension, was classified as Informative. Demonstration achieving Conviction was classified as Transforming.

(2) Janusian approach was found to lend emphasis, but not in terms of problem solving. It can be used to allay fears products which has to match two conflicting attributes, such as "frozen" and "fresh". Though it did influence attit (transforming) in low involvement product, the bias was toward informative.

(3) These creatives, more appropriate for industrial products, were absent in the study sample.

Brands	Key Information	Creative	Criteria				Comments
			* FCB	Rossiter & Percy	** Haberland & Dacin		
Wills Filter	Product-cigarette PLC-mature Market- competitive Target segment- upper middle to upper income group Audience - user State-knowledgeable Post launch ads media-print	Common touch-visual depicting a couple in complete harmony 'made for each other', analogy is drawn with filter and tobacco with the help of copy line	1 Feel-do-learn, do-feel-learn; achieves self-identity and leaves a pleasant feeling, reinforcer (psycho-logical)	Execution (perfect harmony) is unique to the brand. Brand delivery is by association	+ve Copyline, Persuasiveness, Entertaining, Involving, So much in the ad		It has shown high campaic ability. Perfect ider with target ment, a stro copy line wh ties audienc product attr bute, suppor the position 'Taste', is inforcing.

'Key idea' is forcefully demonstrated, picture tells the message (Ogilvy). Being sketchy or inability to change views have not been inhibitors to the affective responses.

| Gold Flake Filter King Cigarettes | Characteristics are similar to Wills Filter except that the market is less competitive and target segment is in higher income bracket | Execution-Symbolic to achieve identity with the target audience Headline and copyline together bring out the characters of the target audience and brand. | 1 Feel-do-learn, do-feel-learn | Same as in Wills Filter | +ve: Meaningfulness and intriguing, simple but powerful message, involving | | A perfect bl of visual an text with br name and position. strong copy/ headline Brand charac in harmony w target image |
| Classic Cigarettes | Same slightly high income group | | | | | | |

1 Considering these to be high priced brands, the decision hierarchy for some could be 'feel-do-learn'. Besides these ar social (visible) products

* FCB - framework is more relevant for introduction stage. For a mature brand, the ad would be reinforcer or reminder. analysis would be valid for those who are about to uptrade and hence would be the target audience. It is known smoker switch on to higher price brands with stage of life cycle.

** Taken from those who are occasional/likely to be regular users.

Note: 1. RSCG survey - agency/client judgments not included as these apply to pre-immediate launch ads.
2. Informational and transformation are identical to terms used by Rossiter and Percy.

Brands	Key Information	Creative	Criteria			Comments
			FCB Vaughn [*]	Rossiter & Percy	Haberland & Dacin [**]	
1						
Liril (Soap)	Product - soap [@] PLC-mature [@] BLC-mature Market-very competitive several positioning Target-middle class Buyer state: aware media: print TV	Execution: Use of signs/ symbols to highlight the position of freshness TV-background music with facial expression	Do-learn- feel Succeeds through execution (satis- faction)	Tranformational: execution was unique to the brand, resulting in lasting asso- ciation, liked by audience, music accentuated the relaxation effect Informational: benefit stated extremely	+ve: enter- taining, simple and powerful message, persuasiveness, tasteful	Picture tell the story, message (Ogilvy) Effect accen ated by use music - also achieve plea feeling
Lux	Same	2 Image:Screen celebrity as endorser	Feel-do- learn	Tranformational: reinforcing		Tone, endorse effect. It personality c the brand (n(credibility) which has spr success

1 Except for model no significant changes made. Being common has not been an inhibitor. Both visual and music have been mentioned as impressive elements of the ad.
2 Little to differentiate on physical attributes (Frazer)

| Nirma
detergent
powder,
Cheaper
segment | PLC-mature
BLC-mature
Market-competitive
presence of national
and international
brand
Target segment - lower
to middle income group
State: Knowledgeable
Media: TV | Execution
(demonstration)
with background
music and jingle | Do-learn-
feel
Acts as
reminder | Execution is
unique to the
brand | +ve: Simple
and powerful
message,
persuasiveness,
unique
presentation.
Also changing
views, want to
see it again,
entertaining.
Music is the
most liked
element. | Reinforcing,
Target audier
like the ad
music is the
most liked as
pect of the a/
acts as mnemc |

Execution is appropriate for a highly competitive market. The brand had grown through increase in application besides wash of clothes

Note: For users the uniform response has been meaningful and satisfying. For non-users the response has been-'like the ad not for me'.
None of these score on surprising or uniqueness as all of these brands are mature and have become familiar to the respondents.
[@] PLC - product life cycle, BLC - brand life cycle

Brand	Key Information	Creative	Performance	Criteria			
				1 FCB	2 Rossiter & Percy	3 Haberland & Dacin '92	4 RSCG Ir Survey
1. Lehar Pepsi 7-up Soft drink (revised version)	PLC-mature BLC-introduction to growth Market - very competitive, strong presence of Indian and foreign companies Position:fun drink/ target segment - all including children target audience - user, portrayed by young adult male & female Buyer state: aware, neutral/positive attitude pre-immediate launch media-TV	Bizarre execution/ Use of Hinglish** and local pop-stars, creating excitement around the brand Brand character matches with audience profile.	Good	Do-learn-feel The cre-ative achieves attention (satis-faction)	transformational execution, where the ad is liked by the target audience (Pepsi-name may have worked)	+ve: Enter-taining, interesting, out of the ordinary, tasteful, impressive visual, want to see it again -ve Low on what is advertised, poor compre-hension, low message clarity	Thrilli mould breakin

1 As noted earlier, FCB is more suitable for introductory stage.
2 Terms are identical in meaning to those used by Rossiter and Percy.
3 More appropriate for print ads.

4 The Client Criteria for Assessing an Ad (RSCG - Indian Survey)

* Is it attention grabbing/intrusive?
* Is it original/thrilling/mould breaking?
* Is it on strategy?
* Is it memorable?
* Is it suitable for target audience? .
* Will target audience like it?
* Does it develop the brand properly?
* Does it differentiate the product?
* Is it consistent with the brand character?
* Is it tonally right for the brand?
* Does it take the high ground over competition?
* Will it be approved by the authorities?
* Does it complement over company posture?
* Is it appropriate to the chosen medium?
* Can it be done within the time constraints?
* Do I like it?
* Will it perform well in research? (only one respondent mentioned this)

Brand	Key Information	Creative	Performance	Criteria			
				1 FCB	2 Rossiter & Percy	3 Haberland & Dacin '92	RSCG Indi Survey
Citra Soft drink	PLC-mature BLC-introductory, in response to Pepsi - offer Market: very competitive Indian and multinationals Media: TV Similar to Lehar Pepsi	Execution: drama/ dramatic effect to bring out effect of Super Cooler (position), Music	Very good	Do-feel- learn true for impulse purchase product which may turn habitual Succeeds in achieving attention and top of mind recall	Informational strategy problem solution benefit stated extremely Transformational: Liked by target audience Appropriate for achieving trial from competition and new custom	+ve: Enter- taining, unique, feel like buying. Presentation, music impressive	

The name depicts the base (Citra fruit, lemon), opens with fire (Ogilvy)

| Ariel | PLC-mature
BLC-introductory
to growth
market-very
competitive
Indian and
multinationals
Target segment -
upper (middle)
income group
Target audience -
User, decider,
housewife
State: knowledgeable
Ad-immediate/launch ads
Media-TV | Common
Touch
-Story
(problem
solving) | Very
good | Do-learn-
feel
(habitual,
economic) | Transformational
liked by
-target
audience
-execution
unique to
the brand | +ve: Useful,
makes you see
the product
in new light,
informative,
single power
message,
entertaining,
want to buy | -meets
nearly all
the
criteria |

Good adaptation to the local conditions, the major attributes of the brand
are brought out involving target audience in a story format, relevant to the
social context. No change in brand name.
Rated as 'common' has not inhibited its growth. Throughout the users have
mentioned 'meaningful' and 'satisfying' as dimensions for their chosen
brands.

(RSCG Survey Contd...)

The Agency Criteria for Assessing an Ad

* Is it fresh/original/exciting
* Is it clear/single minded
* Is it on brief/can it be tonally changed to fit the brief?
* Does it have campaignability?
* Is it well-branded?
* Is it relevant/is the tune of voice right for the brand?
* Is it tasteful?
* Is it likable?

Brand	Key Information	Creative	Performance	Criteria			
				1 FCB	2 Rossiter & Percy	3 Haberland & Dacin '92	RSCG Indi. Survey
2. Jaisalmer Cigarette	PLC-mature BLC-introduction to growth Market - very competitive national/inter- national brands Target segment - upper income, given price, Target audience - user Buyer state - knowledgeable Position - quality product Media-print	Execution symbolic/ visual dominated, depicting masculine rugged personality, but tradi- tional with strong regional bias [very similar to Marlboro]	Not upto expectation	Feel-do- learn Only flavour high- lighted source identity?	Informational benefit-flavour is stated strongly, Transform- ational execution? and target audience?	+ve: Simple but powerful message, makes you see the product in a new light -ve: Not unique, not imaginative, like the ad, product not for me	Scores on! on atten- tion(Size! media mat and clear single minded present- ation

If the cigarette is to build up by wresting share from competition and through new custom, the product image as depicted mu: match the smoker profile of competing brands and potential segment. The missing link appears to be identity of the symbol character with target audience. Support to positioning (quality cigarette?) is weak.

| Colgate
Gel | PLC-mature
BLC-introductory
Market-
crowded,
indigenous
multi-
national
players
Target segment -
Segmented by
price
Audience -
adult and
children
State - high
awareness
Media - TV | Execution:
to the
point of
being
bizarre,
-Carefree
abandon | medium
to poor | Do-feel-
learn
Do-learn-
feel
Does
achieve
attention
and raise
curiosity | Transformational
- Target audi-
ence
like the ad? | +ve: Enter-
taining, out
of the ordi-
nary, want
to see it
again,
impressive
visual

-ve: Not
involving,
not for me | Consisten:
with bran:
character
Relevance
with bran:
Likeabili
by the
target y
audience?
Who is th
target
audience? |

This is a new formulation, emphasizes - freshness appeal Colgate (plain) emphasizes security against tooth decay

The ad is apparently targeted at the teenager group. Depicted profile may have mismatched with target segment unless t! intended segments happens to be the youth segment. The depicted audience do not appear to be associated with the product terms of selecting or deciding it, except in giving it an image. The key idea of freshness is overshadowed by a group i highly enjoying youngsters.

EXHIBIT V: Measure to Assess Viewers' Judgements of the Creativity of an Advertisement (Haberland and Dacin, 1992)

Please indicate your reaction to the mentioned ads in TV and print on the following dimensions using the following scale.

```
   0 · 1     2     3     4     5     6     7
   .------.------.------.------.------.------.------.
  not at all true                        very true
```

1. The advertisement is unique
2. Imaginative
3. This advertisement is really "out of the ordinary"
4. This advertisement is intriguing
5. Commonplace
6. You hardly know what is advertised
7. Satisfying
8. Useful
9. Good
10. This advertisement was meaningful for me
11. This ad does not change your view about the product
12. This ad makes you want to buy the product
13. This ad makes you see the product in a new light
14. Changes your view
15. Involving
16. The advertising message is not easy to remember
17. The advertisement uses a simple but powerful way to get the message across
18. The ad brings lots of thoughts to my mind
19. Interesting
20. There is so much in this ad that you want to see it again
21. I feel like trying out the product
22. I like the ad but the product is not for me
23. It is sketchy
24. The headline is too assertive
25. The ad is tasteful/distasteful
26. Entertaining
27. The most impressive thing in the ad is: music (1), Visual (2), Copyline (3)

Usership Status

Regular   (1)
Occasional   (2)
Non-User   (3)

Note: The statements from 1 to 20 have been adopted from Haberland and Dacin.

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Categorization of Ads

A content analysis of the sample of ads was carried out. The content analysis is basically the categorization exercise of the contents in an ad or communication. 'Instead of interviewing the respondents the investigator studies the communication the people have products and ask questions of the communication'. According to Berelson it attempts to give systematic objective and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication. It contains three major decisions viz., a) choice of categories, b) choice of unit of analysis, c) choice of the system of enumeration. For the given exercise, the different categories formed the typologies to be tested out in terms of message and other elements of the ad. The unit comprised of the entire ad, the system of enumeration was of dichotomy in nature viz., giving judgment regarding presence or absence of an attribute.

Initial Categorization — Development of Categories

A set of 5 categories representing different creative typologies was developed from the existing literature. A group of three judges then coded the categories into two in the following manner. They were briefed on the different categories. The statement or illustrations representing a category were given to the judges along with illustrations/tactics representing other typologies. The judges were asked to classify the sample of illustration either in the test category or other category. For each pair of judges frequency of responses into similar category/dissimilar category were noted as shown in the following table:

FREQUENCY TABLE
Judge 1

		Similar Category 1	Dissimilar Category 2
Judge 2	Similar Dissimilar		

Yule-Q was computed to judge the appropriateness of the categories. The test was repeated for all the categories . Tactics illustations in the first quadrant were taken to represent the test category. This was attempted as a test for content validity.

Final coding The test sample along with coding sheet were given to a new group of three judges. The inter judge coding reliability ranged from .75 to .80, an acceptable level (Perreault et al, 1989).