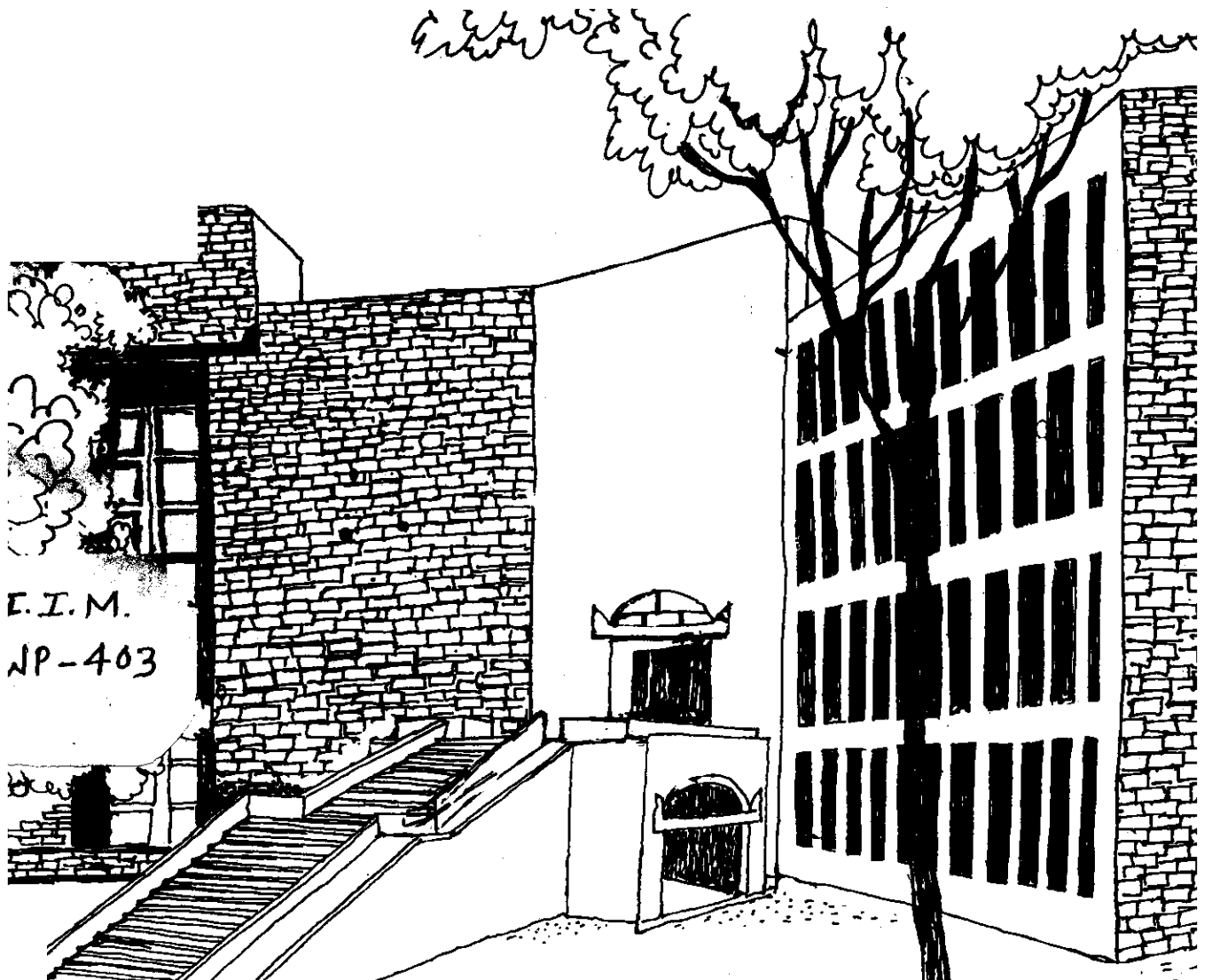




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Working Paper



FORMATS FOR REPLY COUPONS IN
ADVERTISEMENTS

By

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FORMATS FOR REPLY COUPONS IN ADVERTISEMENTS

P.M. Shingi

The ultimate purpose of an advertisement is to lead its readers to act in a certain fashion. This objective may be realized through making them aware, generating sufficient interest among them, changing their attitudes, and by providing powerful justifications for actions. Hence, every advertisement tends to make some offer. Motivation to act depends on how irresistible the offer is. While campaigns with weak propositions crumble in no time, highly persuasive advertisements also cannot keep readers spellbound for a long time. They can stimulate a reader, draw his attention arouse his curiosity, provoke his imagination, and inspire him to find out more. However, in a large number of cases, all these remarkable achievements are short lived till the time he goes to the next highly persuasive advertisement. Therefore, advertisers have to devise ways by which readers are not only motivated while reading the advertisement, but are also encouraged to act quickly on the newly acquired desire. Advertisements successful in stirring the reader's interest can seize the opportunity by inviting him for further information to keep his interest alive and to exploit eagerness. Reply coupons and mailing addresses, in this respect, have a functional role in strengthening further communication.

Advertisers obtain inquiries from readers so that further information on the advertised feature can be furnished to them. Such advertisements generally devote the last paragraph of their text copy for this purpose. In addition, a coupon is placed at the disposal of the reader to express his choice of requirements. The number of inquiries generated by a

particular advertisement appearing in a particular medium also provides useful feedback to the advertisers on the effectiveness of the propositions made in the advertisement, and for media planning. For the latter purpose advertisers can print on the coupon a code number indicating the name of the magazine or newspaper, serial number of release, the year, and month to keep track of the medium generating more enquiries. For example, BI-10-81 could be printed for Business India, October, 1981.

Inquiries

Invitations to send in requests for more literature can be accompanied by coupons though inquiries can also be solicited from readers by simply printing the mailing address of the advertiser. Inquiries offer statements which are generally short and well coordinated with the message communicated in the advertisement. They may also include suggestions to fill out the coupon, if given. The formats for requests vary a great deal in terms of the choice of words, sentence constructions, and styles of approach. A comprehensive list of formats to obtain inquiries is given below:

1. If you wish to learn more about _____, contact the nearest representative.
2. If you'd like to know more about our _____, fill in the coupon below. We will send you our booklet about _____.
3. For a prompt answer, contact your nearest representative in _____ or _____.

4. For reservations, please consult your travel agent or our Sales Office at _____.
5. For more information, return this coupon.
6. For your free copy, write: _____.
7. For details, clip your business card to this ad. and send to _____.
8. For prompt assistance, call or write to _____.
9. For complete details, use the coupon below.
10. To find out more about this position, contact in confidence _____.
11. To learn more about _____, get in touch with us at _____.
12. To get more details, send in our coupon.
13. To receive our latest bulletin, write to _____.
14. To order _____ fill in and mail the coupon below.
15. Learn how you can benefit from our _____
Simply fill out the coupon for our brochure, and mail it to the address listed.

16. Ask for our free bulletin and please mention the following details.
17. Send your request for full details to _____.
18. Get in touch with us for our free literature.
19. Find out more about us. Send us the coupon below.
20. Get to know us better. Write for our booklet.
21. Interested in knowing how _____ can help you? Then send for our latest folder. Write : _____
_____.
22. Want all the facts on _____? Fill out the coupon, send it in and we'll be glad to mail it to you.
23. Would you like to know more about _____?
Drop us a line.
24. Any more questions? Clip the coupon given below and send it to us.
25. Our colourful brochure can tell you more. Ask for it by writing to _____.
26. Our new information literature will tell you more. For a copy, write: _____.

27. We'll be glad to send you an up-to-date brochure, free of charge of course, if you mail us the attached coupon, indicating your name and address.
28. We'll send a booklet on _____ for your convenience. Write: _____
29. Let us show you how we can meet your requirements, Write: _____
30. You can discover more facts about us in our free publication _____ . Write: _____
31. Free specimen copy upon request.. Return this coupon with your mailing address.

As compared to coupons, inquiry requests occupy less advertising space. Furthermore, one coupon can be used only by one reader, whereas inquiry requests can be sent by more readers per copy of publication. Coupons, however, catch attention, make writing a lot easier for readers, are less clumsy, and are definitely more useful for purposes other than merely sending more information.

Coupons

Coupons generally encircle the mailing address of the advertiser, appropriate columns and space for reader's address (including that for phone numbers wherever applicable), and statements of request like "Please

"urnish me full details on _____ without obligation" or "Yes, I'd like to know more about _____." If choices are offered, then either serial numbers corresponding to a list of request items are given to circle the requirements, or square boxes are printed along with statements of requests to be tick marked. To receive the information, the reader is required to type or print his name and the address in the space provided in the coupon.

In addition to these basic elements, the coupons may include 1) the name of the company; 2) name of the brand or product; 3) slogan of the company; 4) symbol of the company; 5) picture of the product; 6) instructions on how to fill in the request form; 7) special discount offers to accompany the coupons; 8) expiry dates for offers or requests; 9) areas in which the offer is valid; 10) name of the association of which the company is a member; 11) one or two background questions; 12) brief hints or policy statements; 13) price of products or publications; 14) statements of guarantee; 15) rates of subscription; 16) tax provisions; 17) telephone numbers; 18) extra space for reader's use; and 19) registered trademarks or copyright marks.

Coupons can be used to supply more information (Figures 1 through 6), to arrange for free samples (Figure 7), to seek an appointment with a representative (Figure 8), to organize a demonstration (Figure 9), and to mail order the product (Figure 10). These figures also represent different types of dotted borders suitable for coupons.

Against a background of black and white or coloured advertisements, a white space is normally earmarked for coupons.

Concluding Remarks

The statement that advertisements should lead readers to act is an abstract notion. The action component can be broken down further to include purchase of a product, attending a demonstration, seeking views of others, deliberating with members of the family, gathering technical or additional data, and making enquiries. Enquiry requests and reply coupons are instrumental in influencing some of these components.

Enquiry and reply coupons can provide support to corporate communications and product advertising. In both cases, however, further information to be sent either through brochure or any other mode needs to be planned well in advance as inquiries may start flowing in right after the publication of advertisement carrying enquiry requests and/or coupons.

* * *

Picture of Product

Find out more about us
Send us your business card today

Address of the company

.....
.....
.....

HEADLINE

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Name of the company

For further information get in touch with

.....
.....
.....
.....

Yes, I'd like to know more about ...

Name _____ Title _____
Address _____ City _____
State _____ Pin Code _____

ADDRESS OF THE COMPANY

ADDRESS OF THE COMPANY

Tell me more about how I can benefit
from _____ product

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Pin Code _____

SLOGAN

ADDRESS OF THE COMPANY

I would like to know more about

Name and address

More questions?
 See your stockist today.
 Clip this and send it to your nearest stockist.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Pin Code _____

Company Symbol

Addresses of Stockists

Address of the Company

Please send me more information about _____

Send me free samples

_____ name

_____ Title

_____ Address

_____ City

State _____ Pin Code _____

_____ Please mail me full details on _____

_____ Have your representative call me for an appointment

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Pin Code _____

Mail to: _____

Want to see a demonstration of our
Send us the following information and our representative
will call for an appointment

Name Title

Best time to call

Address

City State Pin Code

Address of the Company
.....
.....
.....

Illustration of the product
and
Address of the Company

Please send me

I enclose Rs. Money Order

Send by VPP

Signature

Name

Address

City State Pin Code