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Communication Design Theory

Throughout many years, the world has had many amazing ad campaigns come and go. Each one of them were different and had their own style and have provided the world with many of their own works. One of these ad campaigns was an ad campaign by Ikea. Ikea is an international store that sells many ready-to-build furniture and accessories. They mainly specialize in products, such as home furniture, like couches and closets, and kitchen accessories, like cookware, hardware. When it comes to advertising, Ikea does it all. They do TV commercials, magazine ads, online promotions, and more. In most of their ads, Ikea likes to keep it simple. This can be best seen by one of their ad campaigns that they did in at the start of January in 2019. In this campaign they wanted to expand, and encourage shoppers to use online shopping. This was a successful campaign and indeed to help Ikea achieve their goal. They don't usually put a lot of stuff packed into their ads, unlike other ad campaigns. But even though there isn't a lot to see, it doesn't mean there isn't a lot to absorb.

In the Ikea ad, there is a very clear linguistic message displayed directly on the ad. On the ad, it says, "We give a hand to make you shop better". The first part of the type, "we give a hand", is in a sans-serif typeface, all capitals letters, and is colored black. Underneath that, is the rest of the type, "to make you shop better", in all capitals letters as well and in a sans-serif typeface. However with this part of the text, it is colored in white, with a blue stripe, highlighting it. In addition to this, the ad also adds one more small little detail at the end of the text. It is an I-beam cursor. This small detail can clearly communicate a message with its audience

automatically telling them that this has something to do with online. And the text itself says “We give a hand to make you shop better”. When viewers see this, they can get a feeling of assistance and appreciation. The use of the word hand helps this because in the ad, there happens to be a hand right next to the text. All of this combined can be a method called relay. Relay is when text makes your mind go way out of left-field. It would make people curious about what happens next because it would tell you what happens in the image. It seeds your mind elsewhere. It’s not necessarily the text itself, that is giving off a relay, but how the text is presented. The capitals letters, the highlighted part of the text, and the I-beam cursor; all of these elements make the viewer think of something else. Although this may seem to be the only text we see, mainly because of hierarchy, that’s not the only text displayed on the ad. On the lower left corner of the ad, it also says, “ikea.com.eg”. This is clearly a linguistic message indicating to the viewer that on to where to go. It is telling the audience where they can find the product, but making the text look like a link; something you can click on.

In the Ikea ad, there is also an example of connotative elements placed in a specific way. Roland Barthes, author of *Rhetoric of the Image*, defines connotation as a method to imply a message. Connotative is supposed to indicate something beyond the literal structure of what one may see. And this can be found within the hand very clearly. In the ad itself, there is an image of a hand holding onto an Ikea bag. However, one interesting thing is that this ad displays a specific type of hand. The hand displayed is actually a hand that looks very similar to a computer “hand”. It has a white stroke, inside a bold black stroke, all shaped like a hand. This suggests that the ad wants the viewers to start thinking in a specific direction. Once they see that computer hand in the ad, it makes the viewers think of online and computers, in a very commutative way, even without ever saying it. In addition, the way it is holding onto the bag is placed very specific. For

example, in the ad, the “hand” looks like it is grabbing onto the bag’s handles. I believe that the hand was placed like this on purpose to make the audience feel like they actually went shopping and now they are carrying their goods back home. It clearly shows the audience the power and use of online shopping. If they were to use an image of a real life hand, or an illustration of a hand, it would not work, and be as effective. It can give the audience the wrong message and completely make them shift away from any thought of online shopping.

As you can see, Ikea is just one of many companies that is able to successfully communicate with their audience in a unique way. Design that the ones that Ikea produced are just one of few out of many. Many of them use relay and other types of methods in their ads, and are able to communicate with the audience in a very connotative or denotative way. Ad campaigns that have designs like this have been around for awhile, and probably could have been in front of our faces, even if we don’t realize it sometimes. These types of designs made an impact in the past and are still making an impact, even in today’s modern world.

Works Cited

https://www.adsoftheworld.com/media/print/ikea_ecommerce_campaign_1