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EFFICIENT MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP, SHAPED BY THE SEMIOTICS

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ABSTRACT

Effective advertising of entrepreneurship is important for its quality and development. Semiotics (the science of sign systems) can help a lot in this respect. One of the main reasons for this is that every semiotic concept is also an efficient communicative approach or a communicative strategy. In this article, its author analyses advertising of entrepreneurship from the standpoints of four semiotic branches - alphabetics, semantics, syntactics and pragmatics. Visual metaphors are central part in these analyses - due to the fact, that the adpersons produce more than 90 percent of creative ads with their help. Ad appeals are the most important part of marketing pragmatics. The author thoroughly studies the eco appeals and the appeals for support (assistance), that are some of the most significant for entrepreneurial marketing communications. The article is important from the perspective of entrepreneurial advertising and provides valuable practical advice on how the adpersons can use semiotic concepts as effective communicative approaches and strategies.

KEYWORDS

business, semiotics, alphabetics, semantics, syntax, pragmatics, visual metaphor, advertising appeal

INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurial advertising, often referred to as entrepreneurial marketing, is a dynamic approach that blends innovative marketing strategies with entrepreneurial thinking. This perspective is particularly valuable for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) that may lack the resources for traditional marketing methods. Entrepreneurial marketing places a strong emphasis on understanding and engaging with customers. Namely, unlike traditional marketing, which can be rigid and slow to change, entrepreneurial marketing is highly adaptable. Entrepreneurs can quickly pivot their strategies in response to market feedback and emerging trends. In line with this, leveraging the latest technologies and digital tools is crucial. This includes using data analytics to understand customer behavior, employing AI for personalized marketing, and utilizing digital platforms for broader reach (Radović-Marković et.al., 2024).

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By adopting these principles, entrepreneurs can effectively navigate the challenges of the modern business environment and create impactful advertising campaigns that resonate with their target audience.

A marketing war comes from comparative advertising which is one company specifically mentioning a competitor by name for the express purpose of showing why the competitor's product is inferior to the product naming it. We also see that many companies over the years have waged in marketing wars, but one to take note of and still ongoing is the battle between Apple and Microsoft. We also see how Apple began this marketing war with a full front onslaught comparing Microsoft to being in the dark ages. Microsoft has met Apple blow for blow, and both companies have grown and tired making the most innovative product. One of the most important components of marketing strategies in SMEs is necessity to evaluate business goals weekly, monthly, quarterly and annually. This will give consistent information we can follow and allow us to make any adjustments along the way that we may need to ensure success, (Radović-Marković et. al., 2011).

Entering the third world market offers exponential room for growth as the country continues to develop and modernize; however, this also offers several challenges. The "developing" world still does not adhere to western ideals. So, products that may sell in the United States may not be as successful elsewhere. For example, Coca Cola had to invest a lot of time and money in marketing in Asia as, culturally, cold beverages are thought to cause illness. While it was worth it for them, it just as easily could have failed.

Accurate marketing communication is essential for building trust, ensuring customer satisfaction, minimizing errors, making informed decisions, enhancing brand reputation, and driving sales and growth.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Entrepreneurship Theory

The authors of the book "Entrepreneurship and Work in the Gig Economy -The Case of the Western Balkans" analyse companies during the COVID crisis. According to the authors, the firms' competitiveness depends on a large extent on their digital culture and skills, on the introduction of various educational programs and the interaction between industry and virtual universities (Radović et al., 2021).

The authors of the book "Entrepreneurial Perspective of Homestay Operators: A Qualitative Study from Emerging Tourism Industry" examine important aspects of tourism homestay operators in Sarawak, Malaysia. A key finding in this case is the following - for these operators the hospitality and of social connectedness dominate over the wish of economic profit. This is a typical example of not-commercial hospitality and of the host families' strong connection to their positive culture (Shoaib and Marković, 2017).

John Bessant and Joe Tidd study in their book "Entrepreneurship" the concept of "successful entrepreneurship" from the perspectives of business communicators, creativity, innovation, convergent thinking, etc. Some of the main highlights of the book are about "entrepreneurial thinking", "venture financing", "financial resources", "financial relationships", business model, business plan, competition, crowdsourcing, etc. (Bessant and Tidd, 2018).

Identifying business opportunities, creating an enterprise, financing and managing it, are some of the most important concepts in the book of Anil Kumar "Entrepreneurship Development". The author also



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analyses important aspects of concepts “social responsibility”, “business ethics” and legal aspects of entrepreneurship (Kumap, 2008).

Scott Shane - the author of the book "A General Theory of Entrepreneurship. The Individual-opportunity Nexus" evaluates in depth the different elements of the entrepreneurial process. The author focuses on the professional competences of people who are engaged in it. “Entrepreneurship” and the “entrepreneurial practice” are some of the most important concepts in this book (Shane, 327).

In his article "Entrepreneurship theory, process, and practice in the 21st century" Donald Kuratko analyses key aspects of entrepreneurship education. The author explores some significant achievements in this regard. He also analyses three important components in relation with entrepreneurship education (Kuratko, 2011).

The characteristics of entrepreneurship vary across cultures. Stephen Roper in his book "Entrepreneurship. A Global Perspective" explores in depth entrepreneurship from an intercultural perspective. Due to this, the book is very useful for entrepreneurs from different cultures. With its help they can better understand their counterparts from other cultures and due to this, to be more effective (Roper, 2012).

"The Handbook of Research on International Entrepreneurship" is also quite useful from an intercultural perspective. Its authors are some of the best-known experts in the field of intercultural entrepreneurship. They analyse the different cultural characteristics of entrepreneurship in China, Canada, Sweden, Israel and some other countries (Dana (Ed.), 2004).

Theory of Semiotics

M. Faizan in his article "The Role of Semiotics in Advertising: Communicative Approach" analyses the books of two of the world's leading semioticians - Ferdinand de Saussure and Charles Pierce and how the adpersons can apply the main concepts from these important semiotic theories in advertising (Faizan, 2019).

M. Džanić in his article "The semiotics of contemporary advertising messages: decoding visuals" examines key aspects of denotation and connotation. Some of the highlights are about the transformations of denotation into connotation in advertising and about the signs with mythological meaning (Džanić, 2013).

G. Mick in his article "Toward a Semiotic of Advertising Story Grammars" explores chief aspects of the theory of narratives, their basic components, their structure, and their application into TV commercials (Mick, 1987).

The book of C. Goddard "Cross-linguistic Semantics" explores how the representatives of different cultures interpret (actualise) one and the same extra-linguistic phenomenon depending on their different national characteristics. The adpersons can use the same approach in advertising. The reason is that adpersons communicate one and the same good differently – depending on the heterogeneous consumers (Goddard, 2008).

RESEARCH AND MARKETING COMMUNICATION OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Marketing communications begin with research about the values and other important phenomena of relevant goods (service, object or idea) for its customers. Good example in this respect is the service

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Kimola Cognitive – a tool for customer feedback analysis. It examines online the feedback in 26 languages and helps companies to develop their business, using valuable information about their customers.

In this case, the creative adpersons used this research method to build the company's ad campaign. It is entitled “We are all researchers.” and the campaign had been launched in 2023 in Turkey and in the US. This title highlights the company's commitment to provide research not only for big, but also for small and medium-sized enterprises.

The adpersons based each decision on thousands reviews in the World Wide Web – for example:

- choosing the perfect dress - in Etsy,
- discovering the best Sunday breakfast bakery - in Tripadvisor,
- choosing the best vacation home - in Airbnb, etc.

The researchers have collected the information about the best ski resort from Booking.com (Figure 1).

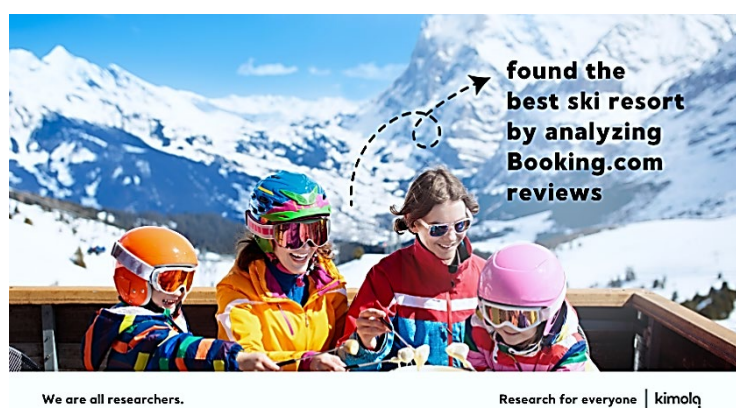


Figure 1. Collected informations from Booking.com

ENTREPRENEURSHIP' BRANDING

Marketing communicators start to brand the goods after they gathered and analysed the relevant information. Branding means that they create the permanent signs (the communicative constants) for the respective company.

For example, Coca Cola's communicative constants are the red colour, the specific logo, the shape (design) of the bottle, Santa Claus, polar bears and some others.

The following images are good examples about branding signs for entrepreneurial summit.

We can analyse the brand signs of this summit from the standpoints of:

- semiotics;
- narratives;
- archetypes;



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- consumer psychology;
- technology, etc.

From the point of view of semiotics, the main signs in this case are:

- the specific font;
- the metaphorised lamp (both a sign of creativity and of technology)
- the specific blue and orange colours;

The designer demonstrated how these signs look on different ad vehicles - badges, bags, mugs, etc. The designer also must show how the permanent signs (communicative constants) will look on electronic media - lap tops, tablets and mobile phones.

It is excellent that the designer has also branded the billboard (the glorification place) - against which the participants take pictures and therefore glorify themselves.

This is the most important place of summit in terms of heroic narratives and heroic myth theories. It transforms the ordinary participants into almost exceptional beings, ascribing to them the semi-divine status.

ADVERTISING AND MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP FROM THE STANDPOINTS OF SEMIOTICS

The branding is the basis for the creation of advertising and other marketing communications. We can analyse them from different perspectives - in this case, from semiotics' standpoints.

Semiotics is the science of sign systems and some scientists structure it in 4 parts:

- **Alphabetics** – it analyses the different sign systems (natural signs, colours as a sign system, animals as a sign system, etc.) and the structure alphabets of these different and numerous signs.
- **Semantics** – it analyses semantic concepts (semantic field, zero morpheme, intertextuality, diachrony/synchrony, semiotic translation, liminality, continuum, etc.) and stylistic figures (similes, metaphors, metonymies, hyperboles/litotes, personifications, etc.).
- **Syntactics** – it analyses the numerous connections of signs, the texts, the contexts, etc.
- **Pragmatics** – it studies people's attitudes to reality and the different signs for one and the same thing - depending on our changed attitudes to it.

The key thing in this case is that every semiotic concept can also an efficient communicative approach or strategy.

A typical example in this respect is a poster for annual start-ups' summit in Athens (Figure 2).

The artist created the poster on the basis of some concepts form alphabetics and semantics:

From the perspective of alphabetics - the owl is part of sign system of animals and from a Greek and European perspective it signifies wisdom.



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From semantic point of view, this owl is a typical metaphor because the artist attributed technological features to it - the signs for postmodern start-ups.



Figure 2. Poster for annual start-ups' summit

Metaphor is the most common (frequent) stylistic figure of transfer. With its help we transfer (attribute) characteristics of one thing to another on the basis of similarity. At the same time, this metaphorised owl is also a typical example of semantic notion "synchrony/diachrony".

"Synchronic" is the contemporary part of the owl – the metaphorized technological half. Diachronic (historical) is the classical part of the owl – as probably the artists depicted this bird during ancient Hellenic civilization.

All this proves the fact that the adpersons use semiotics to create highly effective marketing communications.

Visual metaphor is the most common stylistic figure in creative ads. Probably more than 90 percent of them are created with the help of visual (pictorial) metaphors.

A typical example in this respect is a print advertisement (print, ad) with the following headline "Communicating the social role of a business between sustainability and prosperity" (Figure 3).



Figure 3. "Communicating the social role of a business between sustainability and prosperity"

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The ad communicates company that combines financial success with ecology. The adpersons expressed financial success with an ascending abstract graph of success that metaphorically grows (continues) into a green tree. It stands as sign for the ecology and sustainability.

In an ad for another environmentally friendly company, the adpersons used personification (Figure 4).

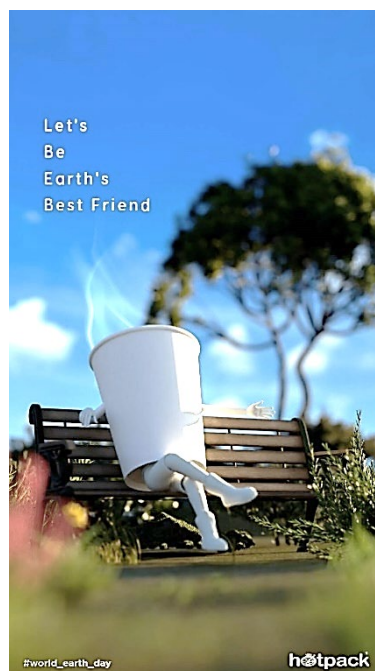


Figure 4. Personification

Personification is the stylistic figure by which communicators attribute characteristics of people to inanimate phenomena (things). The artist ascribed to a paper cup characteristics of man sitting on bench. The reason is that the company Hotpack – the manufacturer of these cups, produces sustainable and environmentally friendly packaging. The ad also expressed the Earth Day.

COMMUNICATIVE STRATEGIES FROM STANDPOINTS OF SYNTACTICS

Syntactics studies the various and multiple connections of signs and the texts. Context (what surrounds the signs) is also important syntactic concept.

We can use connections and context as communicative approaches. One of the most common syntactic strategies is that of Ambient. Ambient is ad communicative strategy that is based on environment.

Ad agency Bud executed a green campaign for Shri Vinayaka Enterprises with the help of biodegradable posters with eco-friendly straws across Bangalore (Figure 5). This company used biodegradable posters with eco-friendly straws in juice shops in Bangalore.

The consumers took the straws from the posters to drink the juices. The straws' ad campaign is ambient because it happened in the context of juice shops.

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Figure 5. Green campaign for Shri Vinayaka Enterprises

COMMUNICATIVE STRATEGIES INTO THE FRAME OF PRAGMATICS

Pragmatics is the fourth semiotic unit. Ad appeals are one of the most important constituents of marketing pragmatics because they express the attitude of customers towards reality. Ad appeal is the basic motivational drive that attracts the customers to the advertised goods.

In the previous ads (prints), the main appeals were these of ecology. They are of key significance to all post-modern businesses, including the entrepreneurial sector. Other important appeals are these of support.

Egyptian ad in traditional media and in social media (Figure 6) demonstrates how to help microenterprise owners to grow their businesses and to contribute to the development of Egyptian economy.



Figure 6. Egyptian ad in traditional media and in social media



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FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Accurate marketing communications are important for the effective enterprises. We can create effective marketing communications with the help of semiotics. The reason is that semiotics is by no means an abstract and difficult to understand academic discipline, however quite friendly and easy to understand practical science. Every semiotic concept is both a communicative approach or even a communicative strategy. That is why the experienced communicators and entrepreneurs can use semiotics to create effective ad campaigns. The eloquent proofs of this are the ads in this article.

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