

## 3.6: Exercises

### Tie it All Together

Now that you have read this chapter, you should be able to understand how the economic effects of advertising are constantly being spread throughout the economy:

- You can *recognize* that advertising is the glue that holds our culture together.
- You can *identify* the various economic effects of advertising with respect to overall size and impact.
- You can *interpret* the economic rationale for creating, accepting, and using advertising.
- You can *describe* the positive effects of advertising and how it enhances our world.
- You can *discuss* the ethical hot buttons that engage our social institutions in critical discussions of advertising.
- You can *recall* the various federal and industry regulators that monitor advertising and advertising practice in the United States.

### USE WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED

1. Picture yourself driving your electric car down the highway of tomorrow looking for a place to refuel. Though this vision might be optimistic at this point in time, electric and alternative-fuel cars are realities just over the horizon. Refueling stations for electric cars will most likely not resemble the corner or freeway gas station. Instead, refueling sites are more likely to look like roadside parks. Refueling stations that recharge batteries may have solar roofs that provide the current for the refueling. Since refueling is expected to take several minutes, refueling stations will provide for rest and activities. If advertising is the “glue of a nation” with respect to its culture, explain what role advertising would play in making electric and alternative fuel cars and their refueling stations become a reality in the future. Consider aspects of social responsibility as you form your explanation.
2. Do you have any idea how often your life is impacted by Bluetooth technology? In case you didn’t know this, it is Bluetooth technology, developed by communication giant Ericsson, that enables all of our electronic and informational devices to talk to one another. For example, Bluetooth technology enables wireless headsets to communicate with other devices. You might have noticed that Aliph has just introduced a new Bluetooth-enabled headset called Jawbone that is smaller, lighter, and cuts wind noise more than any previous headset designs. The headset is about the size of a large rectangular earring or about one-half the size of existing headset models. There is, however, a significant problem that must be addressed before headset communication is advised for everyone. There are reports linking forms of brain cancer to cell phone and headset use. Experts are studying the possibilities and connections. No conclusions have been reached yet. Your task is to assume that you are a member of the Advertising Council and have been asked to design a PSA (public service announcement) that will both quiet fears and encourage information-seeking about the subject as research progresses. Write your message. How do you think those who support headset and cell phone development would respond to what you have to say? Comment.

### DIGITAL NATIVES

Being environmentally friendly is one of the objectives valued by many of us today. The “green movement” is being embraced in a variety of ways. One of the ways is through the development of alternative energy sources such as wind power. Wind power has proven to be an efficient method for generating electricity. One of the companies attempting to harness wind energy and make it profitable is Dutch-based Vestas. Since it has 20+ percent market share of the industry and puts up one of its wind towers somewhere in the world about every five minutes, Vestas would have to be considered a growth-oriented company with a bright future. The company recently has expanded its international operations to North America by establishing a U.S. office in Houston, Texas.

Go to the Vestas Web site at <http://www.vestas.com> and learn more about the company, wind power solutions, and what Vestas plans to do in the future. Once you have gathered background information on the company and wind industry, use the *six-item* list found in the “Economic Rationale to Use Advertising” section of the chapter to determine what informational strategy (or strategies) would be best for introducing Vestas to U.S. consumers. Write your ideas down. Remember to focus your suggestions on the main themes of the list.

### AD-VICE

1. Assume that you are a representative of the advertising industry who has been asked to debate a leading economist on whether advertising is wasteful and manipulative or not. Develop *four* reasons to support your contention that advertising serves a useful function in our society. Your reasons should anticipate the comments that would be made by your adversary—the economist.

2. Based on your understanding of how advertising assists in defining “who you are” with respect to your body image and self-esteem, take three market segments—teens, thirty- to forty-year-olds, and seniors (sixty- to seventy-year-olds)—and demonstrate how advertising provides “definition” to these segments. In your opinion, are these “definitions” correct? Be specific in your demonstration, illustration, and assessment.
3. Some critics have claimed that advertising is responsible for perpetuating sexism and poor environmental practices. How would you respond to such criticism? Summarize and support your position. Present your position during an open class discussion of such criticism.
4. Advertisers aim to present advertising messages to those who want the messages or would be open to new information. One of the ways to accomplish this objective is to use *product placements* in strategic positions in movies, video games, communications, and our daily lives. Evaluate product placement by listing the pros and cons of the practice. Cite illustrations to match your assessment of the practice. Does the practice need more or less regulation? Explain and comment.

## ETHICAL DILEMMA

According to media and advertising critics, one of the chief causes of negative body image among teens and younger adults is the models used to display everything from cars to fashions to makeup. As indicated in the chapter, body image “refers to a person’s subjective evaluation of his or her physical self.” The key word is “subjective.” Messages are open to different interpretation. Critics claim advertising messages by their very nature cause consumers to reject their current situation or status quo and embrace change toward some ideal state as specified by the advertiser. If true, this could have a negative impact on those who read or view commercials, especially those who are younger and more impressionable.

To illustrate the ethical difficulty in dealing with body image, prepare two collages using pictures from contemporary magazines. One of your collages should illustrate unrealistic body images displayed in commercials that are, in your opinion, ethically questionable. The other collage should illustrate what you perceive to be a more realistic and ethical way to deal with the presentation of body image. Once they are completed, compare your collages; comment on where you think this debate over body image might be headed in the next few years. Be prepared to discuss your collages, thoughts, and position.

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