

Emotions and interactivity in advertising

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I dedicate this thesis to all graduate students who have endured the long struggle of writing their essay. First I would like to thank my parents and siblings for their unconditional support and love. I would also like to thank my thesis advisor, Johan Teirlinck for guidance and help.

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I. Introduction

Interaction. In a pure sense it is the effect that occurs upon an action between two or more objects. For example in communication of any sort; a conversation between two or more people (face to face, internet, mobile, etc...), between groups or organizations, nations, etc... It all happens on a daily basis.

However, it isn't the general definition of interaction I wish to elaborate further on, as this subject is too extensive and doesn't really add value to my subject.

I would rather talk about emotional interactivity, in a first phase referred to as 'emotional intelligence'. It is defined as the ability to understand one's own emotions, to listen to others and to empathise with their emotions in order to improve life around you as well as relationships. It is not always an easy task for everyone, as some people never question themselves. The same goes for products and their advertising. There's nothing more frustrating then irritating advertising about a product that tries to position itself and gets portrayed as the best solution to certain problems without properly investigating the needs or point of view of their target group.

This definition leads to the term of 'emotional interactivity'. As we know human beings are emotional creatures that interact with each other, or other entities. For example people weep when seeing a sad movie. This is a common response when being subject to an emotional experience.

People can make each other happy or cry. These are actions that enable them to improve or alter their relationships.

It goes without saying that advertisers have to pay the utmost attention to this aspect when launching a campaign. Their message will evoke certain emotions, which in term will influence people's actions in a positive or negative way.

It is therefore interesting to take a closer look at today's field of advertising, the changes it has undergone and see what their causes are. It is equally interesting to examine how far advertising is willing to go to reach and move consumers and which techniques are employed to do this. This research will broaden my understanding of this field and provide a good background for my project.

The first chapter of my thesis will approach today's field of advertising. More specifically the changes that occur in the world of advertising, suggesting a new world and new advertising strategies in order to meet people's expectations. This chapter will also be about pushing borders to see how far one can go with advertising.

The second chapter will discuss the concepts behind my project. It will document street art, it's evolution and its relation with advertising. The concept of urban interventions will be discussed, as well as the personal character of objects and the emotional value it brings forth.

The final chapter will deal with a description of the concept of my master project and the actual realization of it.

II. Advertising today

Consumers are exposed to hundreds of advertising or branded messages on a daily basis, whether it is through broadcast, print media, billboards and other outdoor promotions, the Internet, and many more. This visual clutter causes people to become saturated and indifferent to all those images they're exposed to. Better, they have learned to set themselves apart from it, to ignore or to bypass it, and to discard any unwanted commercial message¹. As a result, brands and advertisers need to search for new ways to get their messages across.

It appears that traditional advertising, and by this I mean radio, television and print media, has lost its splendour, as people become more and more resistant to advertising. This model of advertising is changing, as push-based advertising is dying². Some people even claim it's dead³ as it becomes ineffective as new forms of advertising emerge.

It is clear that the world of advertising has been undergoing a revolution these last two decades, partly because people's attitudes towards advertising are changing but also because of technological evolutions, which is something that has also affected other fields like the field of illustration, as was pointed out in my previous thesis⁴.

It seems interesting in a first part to discover what the reasons are why traditional advertising is losing its glory, followed by the changes that have occurred in this field. A new world of advertising is suggested with new forms of advertising that are more adequate to reach consumers and their expectations. Finally, it will be interesting to see how far advertisers dare to go to reach their public.

2.1. Death of traditional advertising?

One thing is certain; the field of advertising has changed. The image of traditional advertising that we know from the series *Mad Men* has been disappearing as the nature of advertising has been changing dramatically. There are several factors have influenced these changes.

Firstly consumers have become saturated and indifferent to the visual clutter. As we wander the streets, read magazines or newspapers, listen to the radio or watch television, advertising messages jump out in front of us. Next to annoying advertisements, some advertising messages are fun to watch and to listen to, but after ten times they become irritating.

It seems interesting to give a few examples of aggravating advertisements to illustrate why consumers get fed up with it. While listening to the radio in your car you most probably have heard the radio spots of "Quick! Je gaat voor zijn smaak", "Carglass herstelt, Carglass vervangt!", or the advertisements for "Gamma" with the irritating voices done by Luk Wyns from the "Familie Backeljau"⁵. You could zap away but the road needs your attention or you don't want to change the interesting program you are listening to. The same goes for Television commercials, only here you have the option of getting up and grab a snack, but you will still hear it. On the next page there are a few examples of bothersome television commercials.

1 Bold horizon. "The demise of traditional advertising" (visited on June 29, 2011) (<http://www.boldhorizon.co.nz/brand-marketing-blog/index.php/the-demise-of-traditional-advertising>)

2 Mallia, Karen L. & Windels, Kasey, (2011) "Will Changing Media Change the World? An Exploratory Investigation of the Impact of Digital Advertising on Opportunities for Creative Women". (visited on June 26, 2011) (<http://jiad.org/article145>)

3 Richard W., Oliver, (1994) "Death of advertising". (visited on June 29, 2011) (<http://www.allbusiness.com/marketing-advertising/advertising/480549-1.html>)

4 De Block, Eva. 2010. Today's illustration: the rebirth of illustration?

5 Wikipedia. "Gamma winkel" (visited on July 10, 2011) ([http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gamma_\(winkel\)](http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gamma_(winkel)))

The Tampax TV commercial with Mother Nature interrupting a good party.



Mother nature TV commercial for Tampax
(<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ECZ7gsSBp7c>)

The Carglass TV commercial one has seen or heard a hundred times.



Carglass TV commercial
(http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cGU29Kj_vtc&feature=related)

The Belgacom TV commercial “ma ge kunt ni zonder he?” Where a child is complaining about his parents not listening to him, as he tries to convince them to get Belgacom digital Television.



Belgacom TV commercial
(<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jM9PdgPoHjQ&feature=related>)

The Jetair TV commercial with the two kids Marie & Louis, that always yell “Toppie!”



Jetair TV commercial with Marie and Louis
(<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vO0VN1wbMsE>)

The last two examples are TV commercials with children, and deserve a note. The use of children and puppies has shown itself to be useful in the past, making commercials cute like the Scottex commercials with a puppy, or funny like the TV commercials “maman a dis que je peux”⁶ for Hansaplast condoms, where a child gets to do anything he wants because his mom says “Ouiiiiiiiii” during her orgasms. Another commercial, for Zazoo condoms features a kid who is so irritatingly crying for sweets⁷ that it becomes funny. The problem arises when these commercials are overplayed and lose their effect to become excruciatingly irritating in stead. The use of kids in today’s ads follows the same pattern.

In my opinion, the most annoying commercials are mostly for household products.

You’re undoubtedly familiar with commercials for Calgon, Vanish or Cilit Bang next to the commercials for consumption goods like Kellog’s Special K or the Danio commercial “waaaouw das lekker, was da?!” Wouldn’t you rather go for a root canal?

What about print and poster advertising? People experience these forms of advertising as less invading although they are everywhere in the streets. With these types of media people can just look away unlike with radio and television, which have a more penetrating effect. Even if you close your eyes you can still hear them shouting for attention.

A second factor that has caused the field of advertising to change is that the market has changed since the prime of traditional advertising. This development has a double explanation.

Firstly there has been a shift from a product-oriented economy towards a service-oriented economy⁸. These new services require a totally different way of marketing and communication than consumer products, rendering the traditional approach increasingly irrelevant, as these intelligent products need to bring a more informational content to their customers.

Secondly, technological evolution has permitted manufacturing to become more flexible⁹ shifting from a mass production industry to one of mass customization. This allowed products and services to be produced for more specific market segments and require a completely new form of detailed informational communication unlike the mass media communication for mass-produced products¹⁰.

A third factor equally caused by technological evolution is the rise of new media. This causes a fragmentation of media that reduces the potential to reach large numbers of consumers¹¹, which subsequently has its impact on advertising. A good example to illustrate this media fragmentation is Digital Television. It provides a wide range of different channels for different consumers, making it impossible for advertisers to communicate a message to everyone through all those channels. It is just too expensive. In addition Digital TV has permitted viewers to fast forward through bothersome advertising blocks making it even more difficult to reach consumers.

When we think of new media we mostly think of the Internet, and smart phones like I phone or Android phones, next to Digital Television.

The most important attribute of these media must be that they are rich interactive communication channels, allowing consumers to have a virtual unlimited control over things and a vast new array of services¹², which also has its impact on the advertising world. These interactive communication channels have resulted in the rise in importance of interactive advertising, which is something I will elaborate on in the next part.

And last but not least, as a result from the previous factors, the cut backs in traditional advertising budgets and the shift of these budgets towards non-traditional advertising agencies¹³, have a major impact on the advertisement industry.

6 You tube. “Hansaplast Condoms:” (visited on July 9 2011) (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7dfyXYwVBP0>)

7 You tube. “zazoo condoms” (visited on juli 9 2011) (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K45m79fEyz8>)

8 + 9 + 10 + 11 + 12 + 13 Richard W., Oliver, (1994) “Death of advertising”. (visited on June 29, 2011) (<http://www.allbusiness.com/marketing-advertising/advertising/480549-1.html>)

The rising prices of traditional media and the emergence of more effective and cheaper media have led big brands to choose for alternative forms of advertising. Big traditional advertising companies see their resources shrink by the day, as their accounts are lost to non-traditional participants. Old forms of business are driven out, as they can't compete with the new players¹⁴, or struggle to reinvent themselves. This eventually results in cut backs in staff, further enforced by a bad economy. Initially the poor economy was blamed for the lay-offs while in fact the field was undergoing massive changes. The recognition of these internal changes is mandatory in order to guarantee further success in this field.

Today big brands like Coca Cola knock on the doors of non-traditional advertising agencies in order to look for alternative ways to reach their consumers.

A result of these changes in the marketing environment is the rise of integrated marketing communication. As advertisers demand more efficiency and coordination to reach their target audiences, an integration and coordination of different communication tools is needed for a brand¹⁵. It is not wise to stick to just one type of media to get your message through as every medium has its advantages and disadvantages depending on the context in which it's used. For example if you just stick to a Television commercial, there is a big chance that a lot of people won't see it thanks to the zapping ability of digital Television or the variety of channels. Whereas if you use different types of media together like billboards and advertising on the Internet along with a Television commercial, more people will likely see it, as they walk the streets or surf the Internet.

We have seen that technological evolution and the new media it brings along have affected the advertising industry these past two decades. As a result, the nature of advertising has changed dramatically but also because advertisers seek new ways of reaching smart consumers who have found a way to block themselves from traditional advertising forms.

New emerging media and advertising vehicles are evolving rapidly and are becoming the norm as traditional advertising is losing ground.

But is traditional advertising dead as a lot of people claim? I wouldn't go that far. It suffers from competition from other 'modern' forms of advertising due to the technological evolutions that have forced it to adapt.

New and cheaper ways of communication have appeared and traditional advertising had to give away a piece of the pie. The choice of advertising medium (traditional or non-traditional) further depends on the kind of customer and the kind of advertisement. Some people don't have Internet and can only be reached by traditional channels. In some cases interactive systems enhance preference and persuasion; in other cases the traditional formats are superior¹⁶. It is therefore important to consider integrating different communication tools in a campaign.

In the next part I will elaborate on a new world of advertising, suggesting new and present forms of advertising that are more adequate to reach consumers and their expectations.

2.2. A new world

How to reach all those consumers that have learned how to block out advertising? People don't want advertising that boasts about a product, depicting itself as a true hero and a solution to all their problems, nor do they want to be told what to do.

That used to be the old push-based marketing and communication strategy.

Today people want to be taken into consideration and to be listened to. In the end they are the ones who purchase the product and have to use it. Why not listen to those needs and hence improve a product and the communication.

Consumers also have the ability to find whatever interests them and filter out all the unwanted communication messages. They have become active consumers who needn't be exposed to dozens of

14 + 15 Zinkhan, George M. & Richard T. Watson, (1996) "Advertising trends: Innovation and the process of Creative Destruction". (Visited on June 29, 2011) (<http://www.scribd.com/doc/7311664/Innovation-and-the-process-of-creative-destruction>)

16 Sharma, Surinder, (2009) "New Media Interactive Advertising Vs Traditional Advertising" (visited on July 12, 2011) (<http://ezinearticles.com/?New-Media-Interactive-Advertising-Vs-Traditional-Advertising&id=2816730>)

messages to be incited in buying the product. If they are interested in a product, the message will get to them through own effort¹⁷.

The question that can be asked here is which strategies advertisers can use to get their messages across to these difficult and smart consumers. The answer lays in more intelligent and individualized advertising perhaps.

2.2.1. Interactive Advertising

The concept of interactive advertising rose out of technological evolution, as described previously. Interactive advertising is “the paid and unpaid presentation and promotion of products, services and ideas by an identified sponsor through mediated means involving mutual action between consumers and producers”¹⁸ as defined by Leckenby and Li¹⁹.

When talking about interactive advertising, most people think about the Internet. Only it doesn't limit itself to the Internet. It includes any form of advertising that seeks a two-way or mutual action. It goes from Guerilla marketing in the streets to any form of online advertising, anything where the reaction of a consumer can be measured. It is important to mention this, as it is relevant for the description of my master project. In this part I will focus on the online interactive advertising. But why is interactive advertising so important? Firstly it's far cheaper than its traditional predecessor. Secondly, unlike the passive one-way communication of traditional advertising, interactive advertising involves corresponding with customers. By asking their suggestions, choices and feedback, advertisers can customize their products and build a better, more targeted and cheaper campaign for their products and services. It also involves letting them participate in a process or create something. For example online 3D software for brands allows consumers to experiment with an interior, like IKEA's home and kitchen planner²⁰. These new technologies tap into the tactical senses²¹ of consumers creating an experience that people can remember. Consequently consumers feel special and appreciated as their problems are addressed personally²². Hence their grudge barrier against advertising is lowered making them more receptive to commercial messages.

It is interesting and relevant to mention a few developments that are somehow related and that have proven themselves to be successful in online advertising. It's a fact that the Internet has the leading role in the development of interactive advertising, but the Internet itself has allowed different interactive elements to develop themselves contributing to the whole field.

One of them is the development of Social media and networking. Blogs or Social platforms like Facebook or Twitter have proven to be very handy in spreading links or videos to friends. This translates into an advantage for advertisers making commercial messages for the Internet and benefitting from the free publicity. This concept of social network advertising has been baptised “friendertising”²³.

A person is more likely to forward a video or a link if it is something different, fun and unexpected²⁴ or when it comes from a friend, instead of something that was sent by advertisers.

But advertisers also use these social networking sites and blogs to reach specific audiences and to

17 Bold horizon. “The demise of traditional advertising” (visited on June 29, 2011) (<http://www.boldhorizon.co.nz/brand-marketing-blog/index.php/the-demise-of-traditional-advertising>)

18 + 21 Schumann, David W.; Artis, Andy; Rivera, Rachel, (2001) “The Future of Interactive Advertising Viewed Through an IMC Lens”. (visited on June 29, 2011) (<http://jiad.org/article12>)

19 Editors of the Journal of Interactive Advertising

20 IKEA. “Interior planner” (visited on July 11) (http://www.ikea.com/ms/en_AU/rooms_ideas/splashplanners.html)

22 Sharma, Surinder, (2009) “New Media Interactive Advertising Vs Traditional Advertising” (visited on July 12, 2011) (<http://ezinearticles.com/?New-Media-Interactive-Advertising-Vs-Traditional-Advertising&id=2816730>)

23 Wikipedia. “Advertising” (visited on June 10, 2011) (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Advertising>)

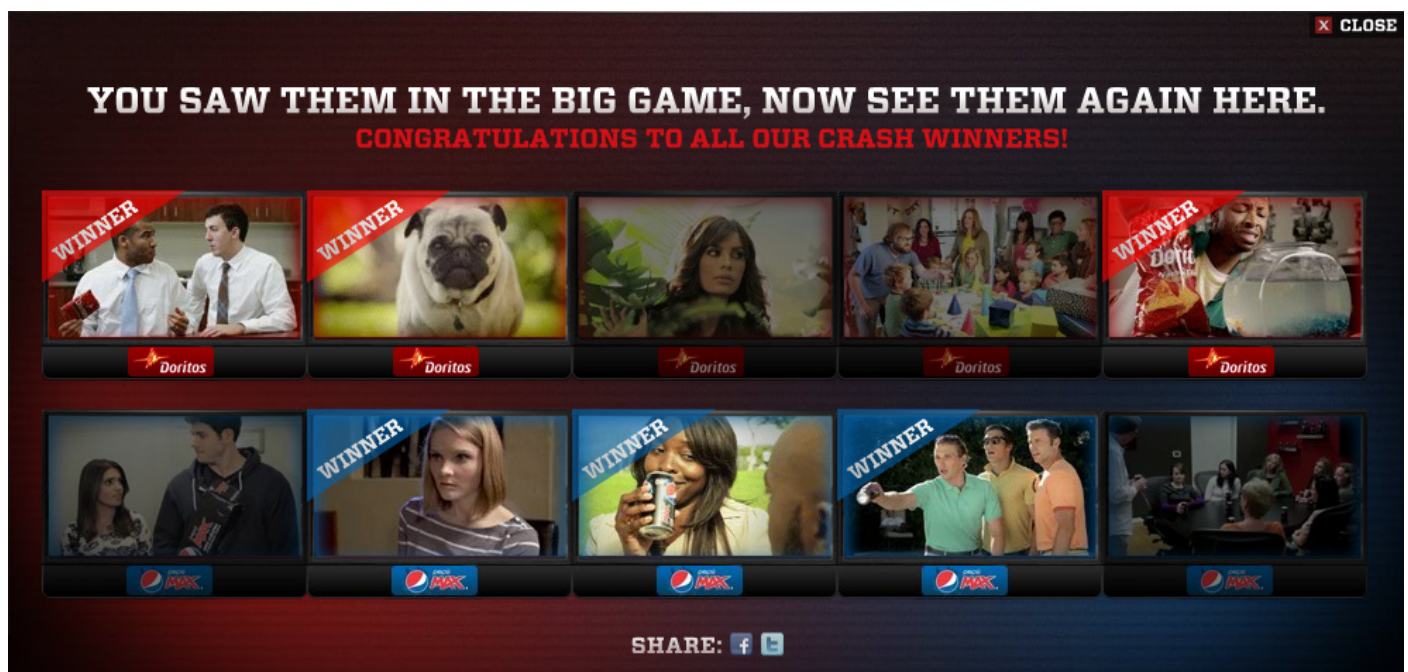
24 The next web. “A look at trends in social advertising” (visited on June 29, 2011) (<http://thenextweb.com/socialmedia/2010/09/08/a-look-at-trends-in-social-advertising/>)

communicate advertisements to them that are more relevant, by tracking customer profiles. Consumers then can look up more information about a certain product or service if their interested in it²⁵.

So beware of the 'like' button on Facebook, it's there for a purpose. As people visit sites for specific products, those products will be remembered and advertised on further pages you visit or on your own profile page, I speak out of experience.

Another development related to the previous social one, is the smart phone. It allows consumers to surf the Web at any time for information and to view videos or pages by scanning a QR code for example. This code scanning allows them to check certain contents on the Internet, which they can then forward to their friends or post on social platforms. Calvin Klein once turned a billboard into a QR code, allowing people to scan it and to be taken to a 'steamy' video that they could then send to friends²⁶, as the content was probably not fit for the wide public and could have offended some individuals. Thanks to smart phones people remain connected with each other and to the world wide web at all times. Some may consider it advantageous and a step forward, others aren't very keen of the big brother idea behind it.

Followed by these two developments is the concept of 'Crowdsourcing' where big brands engage customers into creating their own advertisement by using social media and brand sponsored advertising competitions. A very good example of a successful integrated program is the Doritos "Crash the Super Bowl" where customers were invited to create their own advertisement so they could win a trip to the game²⁷. The campaign was so successful that other brands started taking more interest. Below you can see a few print screens from the website²⁸ and the winning video clips.



Notice the links for Facebook and Twitter so people could share it with friends.

25 Wikipedia. "Advertising" (visited on June 10, 2011) (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Advertising>)

26 The next web. "A look at trends in social advertising" (visited on June 29, 2011) (<http://thenextweb.com/socialmedia/2010/09/08/a-look-at-trends-in-social-advertising/>)

27 Wikipedia. "Crowdsourcing" (visited on July 12, 2011) (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crowdsourcing>)

28 Crash the super bowl. "Winners" (visited on July 12, 2011) (<http://www.crashthesuperbowl.com/>)

◀ BACK


WINNER

PUG ATTACK

by: jrburningham

I can has Doritoz? Oke Nono want a little chippy!



721 COMMENTS

PAGES 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

By mark174: cute dog!

By NYIESHIABELL: too cute111 love the dog.)

By joethehoe224: this video fucked me up the ass seriously

YOU MUST BE [LOGGED-IN](#) TO COMMENT.

▶ ◀◀

SHARE: [t](#) [f](#) <http://www.crashthesuperbowl.com/#/?finalist=6886> COPY

◀▶

◀ BACK


WINNER

THE BEST PART

by: GMummies

I love Doritos...



806 COMMENTS

PAGES 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

By joethehobo224: hey can i join you guys tonight? i have never done it with two guys before.

By joethehoe224: joethebro224: last night was wonderful that thing you did omg! it was like heaven

By Joethebro224: hey joe i know man it just felt so good i wathed the video again

YOU MUST BE [LOGGED-IN](#) TO COMMENT.

▶ ◀◀

SHARE: [t](#) [f](#) <http://www.crashthesuperbowl.com/#/?finalist=1264> COPY

◀▶

The advantages of this concept are numerous. These consumer-generated advertisements are very popular, there is a high consumer engagement, it generates word of mouth as it is spread as a viral campaign to friends, and it is very cost-effective²⁹. But be aware, crowdsourcing for brands doesn't always work. It depends on the consumer engagement and I guess a brand like Doritos is more appealing and fun to create something for than a medical product.

As you can see these developments are all related in a way as they fall under the category of viral advertising, as video clips or other items are forwarded and spread throughout the Internet through Social media, Blogs, You Tube and basic email.

Noticing the success of this type of promotional vehicles it's not surprising that advertisers spend a lot of effort in the creation of cute, silly and informative videos and genres³⁰ to increase the chances of people watching it, being entertained and sending it to others.

²⁹ Wikipedia. "Advertising" (visited on June 10, 2011) (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Advertising>)

³⁰ Advertising about. "New trends in advertising" (visited on June 29, 2011) (<http://advertising.about.com/od/insidetheindustry/a/NewTrendsInAdvertising.htm>)

2.2.2. Emotional Advertising

An equally important concept is the one of emotional advertising. With this type of advertising, advertisers show consumers the benefits of a product or service through drama. They then hope those consumers get so involved with the character and story that it hits an emotional chord³¹, and subsequently influences their attitude towards that product or service. This type of advertising also involves learning to know the consumer better through a two-way communication strategy. An advertising agency named “Emotional Advertising”³² sees the human spirit as a “reservoir of powerful emotions”. Its philosophy is based on the idea that emotional advertising arouses those emotions to get the attention of consumers, to touch them more deeply and subsequently to persuade them more effectively. This is somehow a strategy I intend to use in my master project. People watch movies to be entertained and to be touched by all those emotional stimuli emanating from the screen, whether it is happiness, fear, sadness, etc... People always remember something more when it has touched them and advertisers have thought about it, and decided to use it in their communication like we have seen for viral advertising. As a result the concept of ‘advertainment’ was created. To give you an example, last year a TV commercial for ‘Old Spice’ body soap caught my attention. It was shown to me by a friend and quickly became a funny topic to talk about amongst girls and was shared by many people on Facebook. It happened to appeal to the ladies as a handsome black guy figured in the commercial promoting the Old Spice soap with some kind of sex appeal and humour, saying how someone’s boyfriend could smell like him by using that soap. The video had such a success that ‘Sesame Street’ made a parody and that ‘Old Spice’ itself made a sequel thanking everyone online.



Old Spice Commercial (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=owGyVbfgUE&feature=related>)



Old Spice Sesame Street Parody (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zkd5dJIVjgM&feature=related>)



Old Spice Thanking Commercial (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nFDqvKtPgZo&feature=relmfu>)

But there are limits the use of emotions in advertising. A study made by Petya Eckler and Paul Bolls, that was published in the Journal of Interactive advertising³³ shows the effect of the emotional tone of viral advertising on the forwarding intentions and attitudes. It showed that a pleasant emotional tone and messages with strong emotional feelings, like humour, fear or sadness, triggered the strongest attitude towards an advertisement, a brand, and the forwarding intentions. A negative emotional tone had weaker effects.

Another limit that was pointed out in that study was that highly emotional content such as extreme sex appeal or extreme humour could risk interfering with the effectiveness of the brand communication or risk triggering negative reactions from the viewers when becoming too unconventional. Thus it is important to find a balance between a highly creative, an emotionally engaging and an effective brand communication³⁴.

Let's face it, advertising has been around for ages and it is not likely to disappear. Better improve it by personalizing and optimizing it to meet consumer needs. As you have seen, these advertising strategies have proven to be a good alternative to the traditional forms of advertising to which people have become immune. But these new forms of advertising also have their limits and advertisers must be aware; exaggeration is most likely to diminish its effectiveness and will wear out the customer in the end. Advertisers should keep in mind that in order to be successful they constantly need to find new ways of communicating and implement them as soon as the old ways start showing signs of fatigue.

At this point, it would be interesting to see how far advertisers dare to go to get their message to consumers.

2.3. How far can you go?

The field of advertising has definitely changed, as some traditional forms of advertising became obsolete and new and more effective ways of communicating have emerged and become popular. To reach increasingly difficult consumers emotional and entertaining advertising have proved to be very appealing, but what are its limits? Though the media environment has changed and become more tolerant allowing much stronger and much controversial content³⁵ there are still boundaries. For one person an advertisement might seem funny and amusing while the other may be appalled by it.

33 + 34 Eckler, Petya & Bolls, Paul, (2011) "Spreading the Virus: Emotional Tone of Viral Advertising and Its Effect On Forwarding Intentions and Attitudes". (visited on June 26, 2011)(<http://jiad.org/article142>)

35 Dzamic, Lazar, "A poke in the brain". AIGA Journal of Design, November 22, 2005. (visited on June 10, 2011) (<http://www.aiga.org/shockvertising-a-poke-in-the-brain/>)

The question rises is; how far can or dare advertisers go in pushing the boundaries of consumer conscience through provoking messages?

An artist duo by the name of the 'Chapman brothers' has already done its part in pushing some boundaries on a cultural level with their work. One example is 'Fuck-face', where the faces of dolls that represent children, are deformed as they have a penis for a nose and an anus for a mouth. A quite shocking view to some people and a guarantee for provoking reaction, but at least the artists dared to expose it. To illustrate the idea of boundaries to provocation, I would like to highlight two concepts: 'Culture Jamming' and 'Shockvertising'.

2.3.1. Culture Jamming

Having dealt with this subject in my previous thesis, I will be referring to a part of it. In her book 'No Logo', Naomi Klein defines culture jamming as "the practice of Parodying advertisements and hijacking billboards in order to drastically alter their messages."³⁶ The term was invented in 1984, by the San Francisco Audio-collage band 'Negativland'³⁷ who thought that reworking a billboard would make viewers considerate the original corporate strategy behind the advertisement. Rejecting the idea that people were given no choice but to be exposed to thousands of corporate ads every day, as advertisements were taking up more and more public space, culture jamming activists thought it was time to seize back those spaces³⁸. They believed that everyone should have the opportunity to give their opinion and to respond to advertisements, by fighting back against the big corporate advertisers using any means available. This is something we will also see later in the next chapter with street art and urban interventions. Culture jammers mainly made changes to advertisements and billboards by using black markers or by subtly changing the original image. The message they want to send is one about anti-corporation, anti-consumer, anti-materialism and last but not least anti-advertising³⁹.

As Klein states in her book it is quite impossible to define the roots of culture jamming, mainly because the practice is a mixture of graffiti, modern art, DIY punk philosophy and practical joking. Also the use of a billboard as a canvas isn't something new⁴⁰. Many concepts behind culture jamming are greatly influenced by media theorists such as "Noam Chomsky, Edward Herman, Mark Crispin Miller, Robert McChesney and Ben Bagdikian"⁴¹. These theorists have explored ideas about corporate control over information flows. Culture jammers were also considerably influenced by several avant-garde art movements, such as Dada, Surrealism, Conceptualism and Situationism. The principles of these movements, which is fighting against the norm and using visual images to let your voice be heard, are similar to those of culture jamming⁴².

A good example of an early culture Jamming activist is Jorge Rodriguez Gerada who ironically enough worked in the advertising industry by day in order to make a living⁴³. His art career started when he became a founder of the New York City Culture Jamming movement with the artist group Artflux.

Realizing that the media was very interested in what they were doing, they decided to focus on advertisements of damaging products like alcohol and cigarettes that were advertised in poor areas. They illegally modified those advertisements with a new statement and image that focused on the negative effects of those products⁴⁴. Finding images of this culture jamming work isn't evident considering their nature, but here are a few examples on the next page.

36 Klein, Naomi. 2002. No Logo: 10th Anniversary Edition with a New Introduction by the Author. London: Fourth Estate. P280

37 + 38 Klein, Naomi. 2002. No Logo: 10th Anniversary Edition with a New Introduction by the Author. London: Fourth Estate. P281

39 Wordpress. "Culture jamming" (visited on August 8, 2010)(<http://jamming.wordpress.com/culture-jammingwhat-is-it/>)

40 + 42 Klein, Naomi. 2002. No Logo: 10th Anniversary Edition with a New Introduction by the Author. London: Fourth Estate. P282

41+ 43 Klein, Naomi. 2002. No Logo: 10th Anniversary Edition with a New Introduction by the Author. London: Fourth Estate. P284

44 Artjammer. "Jamming" (visited on August 12, 2010) (<http://www.artjammer.com/jamming3.html>)



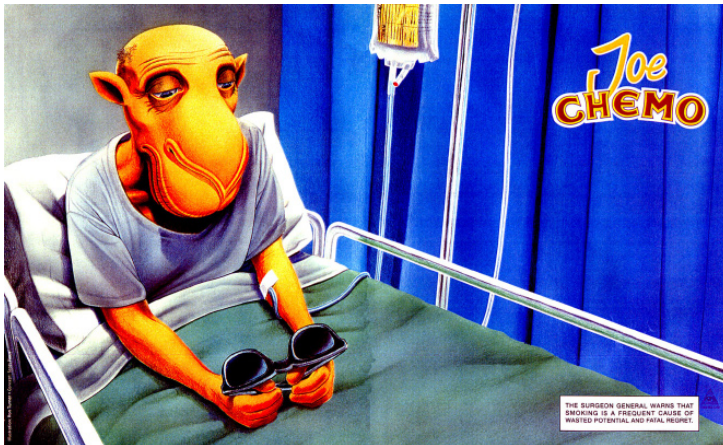
Culture jamming work by Jorge Rodriguez Gerada (<http://www.artjammer.com/jamming3.html>)

Another example of well-known culture jamming group is the Vancouver, Canada based Adbusters that is now a magazine concerned about our physical and cultural environments. They see themselves as “a global network of artists, activists, writers, pranksters, students, educators and entrepreneurs who want to advance the new social activist movement of the information age”. Their aim “is to topple existing power structures and forge a major shift in the way we will live in the

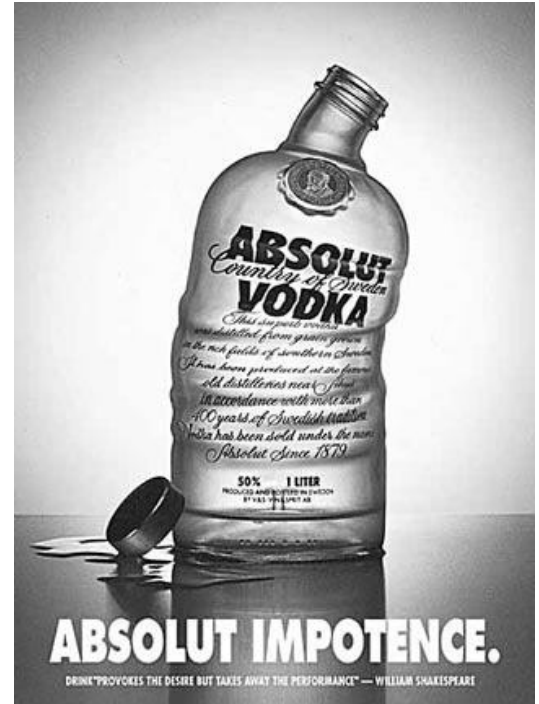
21st century".⁴⁵ Below are some examples of their culture jamming work.



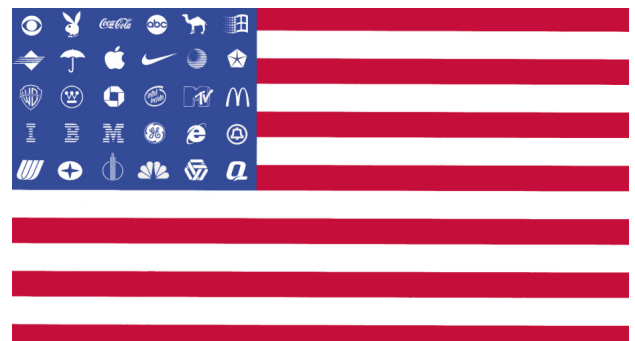
Brand Baby Poster by Adbusters, 2005 (<http://www.satyamag.com/may05/lasn.html>)



Joe Chemo by Adbusters, 1996 (<http://www.notobacco.org/photos/>)



Absolut impotence by Adbusters, 2009 (<https://www.adbusters.org/gallery/spoofads/alcohol/absoluteimpotence>)



Anti-consumerism flag by adbusters (<http://anonymouspond.com/images/raising-the-flag-for-consumerism/>)

The concept of culture jamming applies more to the part on Street art that will be dealt with in the next chapter. However it is important to mention it here as these culture jamming activists push the boundaries of the human conscience. In my opinion they were somewhat the pioneers in bringing provoking or shocking imagery to the public to wake them up about all those advertising messages that are invading our public spaces and minds. Culture jamming activists could be considered as some kind of anti-heroes who are trying to make a wake-up call.

Of course when something is successful, advertisers notice it and try to use it in advertising, especially when they need to reach certain target groups. A special approach regarding a very specific consumer target is shockvertising, described in the following part.

2.3.2. Shockvertising

Shockvertising or shock advertising is the use of provocative, controversial, disturbing, explicit or crass content to nail the consumers attention through all the advertising clutter⁴⁶. Here advertisers

⁴⁵ Adbusters. "About" (visited on August 12, 2010) (<https://www.adbusters.org/about/adbusters>)

⁴⁶ Wordpress: marketplace 21. "Shockvertising: Does it work?" (visited on June 10, 2011) (<http://marketplace21.wordpress.com/2006/09/20/shockvertising-does-it-work/>)

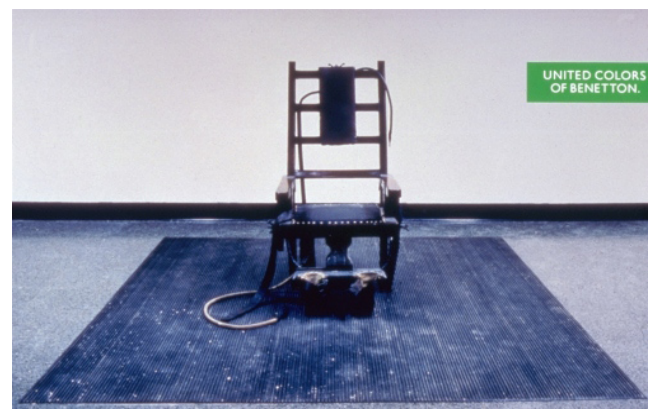
hope to sell their products or ideas through horrifying, terrifying⁴⁷, offensive, taboo, repulsive and emotion-provoking words or images, evoking stronger feelings amongst consumers, and thus striking them harder. To illustrate this you'll find a few examples of shocking campaigns below. A first one is the campaign put out for the TV show Dexter, on Showtime, where gore installations with blood and decapitated limbs were put in place through guerrilla tactics.



Dexter Shock campaign (<http://www.yourdailyfix.net/vega/2009/01/shoc.html>)



Another example is Benetton that has become well known for the use of shocking elements in its campaigns as it has many times led to public outrage and consumer complaints⁴⁸. Here are few examples of its campaigns.

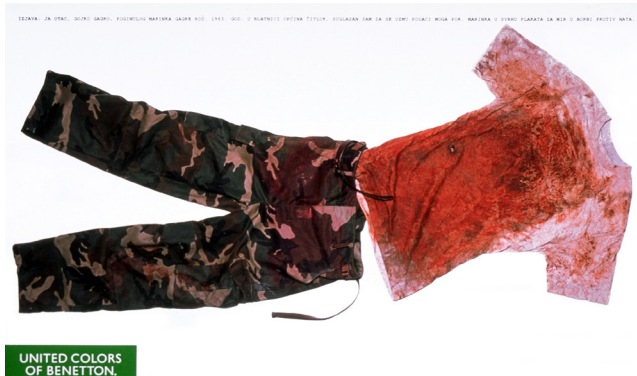
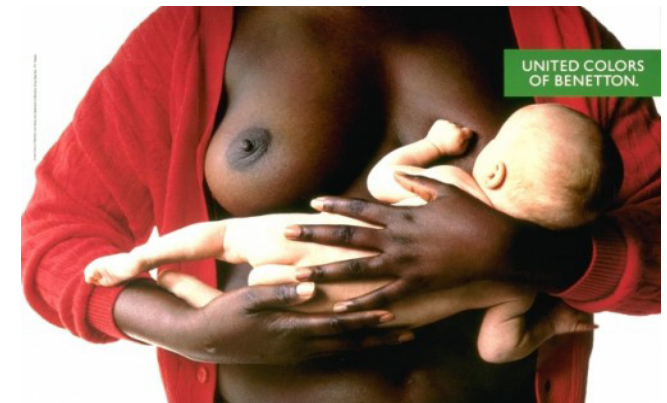


Shock campaign for United Colors of Benetton (<http://fastfoodsociety.wordpress.com/2009/07/23/shockvertising-advertisings-extreme-sport/>)

47 + 48 Wikipedia. "Shock advertising" (visited on June 10, 2011) (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shock_advertising)

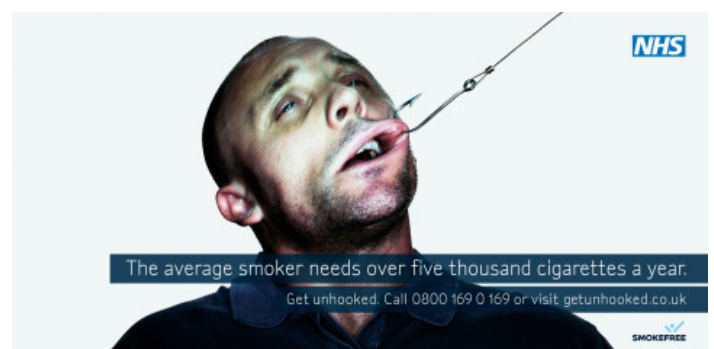
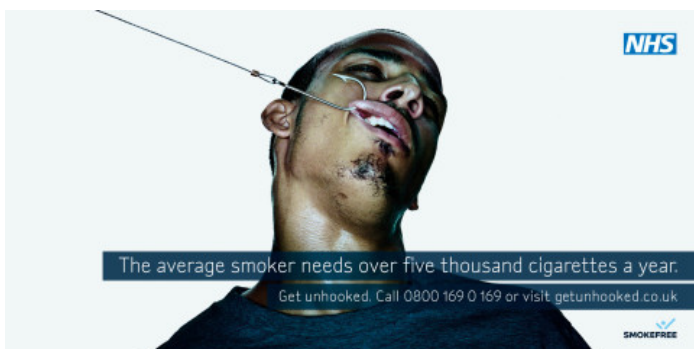


Shock campaign for United Colors of Benetton
(<http://10070869.blogspot.com/>)



Shock campaign for United Colors of Benetton (<http://www.thephotohraphypages.co.uk/articles/toscani-tested/>)

A third example is the anti-smoking campaign “Get unhooked”. The campaign was banned by the British government because it caused “fear and distress”, but in the end it turned out to be a highly effective campaign⁴⁹.

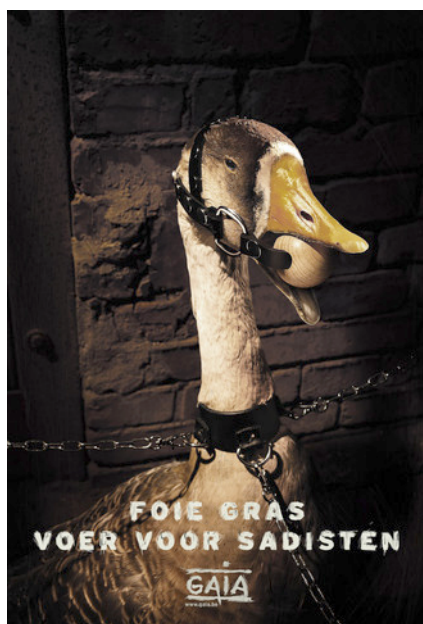


Anti smoking Shock campaign for NHS (<http://theinspirationroom.com/daily/2007/get-unhooked-2/>)

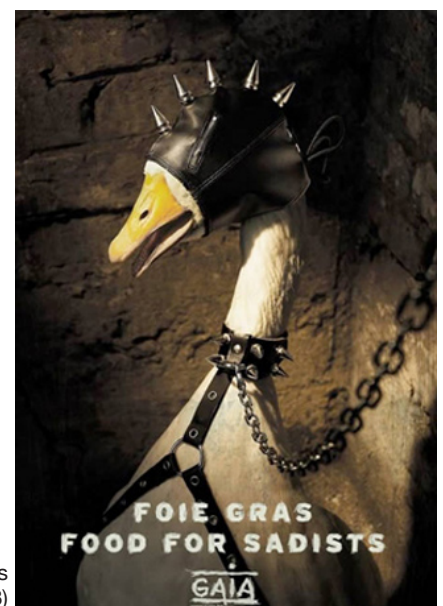
49 Wikipedia. “Schok advertising” (visited on June 10, 2011) (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shock_advertising)



A fourth example is the Gaia advertising campaign against the ill treatment of geese to obtain 'Foie Gras'.

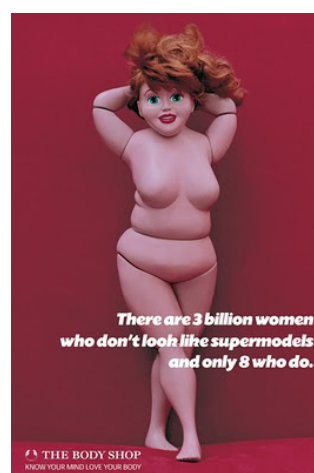


Gaia shock campaign against Foie gras
(<http://www.dignitadoc.be/gaia%20gans.jpg>)



Gaia shock campaign against Foie gras
(<http://blog.wizz.be/archives/373>)

As a final example you'll see the Body shop's anti Barbie doll, Ruby. The advertising campaign figured a nude doll with bulging proportions in order to challenge the anorexic stereotypes of beauty, to go against the pervasive influence of the cosmetics industry⁵⁰, and to boost women's self-esteem⁵¹.



Body Shop Ruby shock campaign
(<http://elbloggodemango.blogspot.com/2011/03/when-body-shop-lost-its-ruby.html>)

50 Anita Roddick. "Ruby campaign" (visited on July 15, 2011) (<http://www.anitaroddick.com/readmore.php?sid=13>)

51 Wordpress: marketplace 21. "Shockvertising: Does it work?" (visited on June 10, 2011)
<http://marketplace21.wordpress.com/2006/09/20/shockvertising-does-it-work/>

These are just a few of many examples, but it is impossible to show them all. It only proves that this strategy is very popular. It is also important to notice that this type of advertising is mostly employed to sensitize people, whether it is against smoking, against sexual and unsafe behaviour, against animal cruelty or other environmental problems, etc... The more shocking your campaign the more it will provoke commotion.

But unfortunately like any other type of advertising, it has its limits. As you might expect, some advertising agencies get carried away and use shock too much as a replacement for smart and sophisticated creativity⁵².

Also there appears to be a thin line between being tasteful and using unnecessary shocking imagery. Tasteful shockvertising will make its point successfully whereas the excess of shocking content might appal people and make them look away in disgust⁵³, failing you campaign.

As we have seen Shockvertising certainly works, but its success depends on how it is used. Like other forms of advertising it depends on the context, the product and the message you want to get across.

In this chapter we have seen some major developments in the field of advertising, as traditional forms of advertising have been losing their splendour making way for new and more effective ways of advertising that have emerged thanks to technological evolutions. These new forms of advertising have allowed advertisers to reach consumers once again through the existing clutter, by letting them take part in the process and turning them into active consumers. But what will be the future of these types of advertising. Will they wear out like traditional advertising forms and make way for newer ones?

The problem arises when something becomes popular and in the end saturates the market. Advertisers have a nose for exploiting new trends until wearing out their effectiveness. There is a constant need to change the strategies to stick out and let the message be heard, to be seen and understood⁵⁴.

Advertisers should take into account many aspects before choosing a certain strategy and of course use them with moderation, otherwise their effectiveness might wear out sooner then expected.

Having explained today's field of advertising, I decided to discuss urban art and character design in the next chapter, as these concepts are important and form the basis for my master project.

52 Dzamic, Lazar, "A poke in the brain". AIGA Journal of Design, November 22, 2005. (visited on June 10, 2011)
<http://www.aiga.org/shockvertising-a-poke-in-the-brain/>

53 Wordpress: marketplace 21. "Shockvertising: Does it work?" (visited on June 10, 2011)
<http://marketplace21.wordpress.com/2006/09/20/shockvertising-does-it-work/>

54 Warner, Patrick, "The anthropology of advertising". AIGA Journal of Design, November 25, 2006. (visited on June 10, 2011)
<http://www.aiga.org/the-anthropology-of-advertising/>

III. Concepts behind my project

In the previous chapter we saw how the field of advertising has changed and evolved, as traditional forms of advertising have been losing ground to newer forms such as interactive advertising, emotional advertising or 'shockvertising'. These are advertising types that have proven to be more effective in reaching today's consumers.

In this chapter a closer look will be given to urban art and character design. I personally think these are very interesting forms of art, and some of their aspects are linked to the field of advertising. I chose these to be the basic concepts behind my master project.

In a first part I will elaborate on urban art, by highlighting the different styles it consists of, the similarities these styles show with the field of advertising and the way they are used in advertising in order to break through the main stream.

In a second part I will talk about character design, the emotional value it brings along, followed by some examples of how this concept is used in advertising.

3.1. Urban Art

Urban art⁵⁵ is a form of art that is developed in public spaces, that is in places outside the spaces we expect to see art, like museums or galleries. In this art form a distinction must be made between the official public art, where permission and a budget is given to artists but where the message has to pass certain official filters, and the independent public art, where artists perform their work without budget or approval from officials that control public space. Nevertheless this second type of urban art gives the artist more freedom, as their message doesn't need to be filtered by any entity⁵⁶.

Next to these two types of public art, there are three styles of urban art I would like to discuss before moving on to the relationship this form of art has with the field of advertising.

3.1.1. Urban art styles

Urban art consists out of three main styles: graffiti, street art or post-graffiti and urban interventions.

Graffiti emerged in New York city in the early 70's when kids started putting their name out in the streets⁵⁷. In those days it was a way for youngsters to escape the everyday life⁵⁸. Graffiti artists use spray paint or markers to tag their names in big and small letters on walls of industrial factories, on trains, under bridges, etc... in other words places that are hard to reach, since graffiti is illegal and it takes quite some time to make a work of art. Also artists don't want to be interrupted nor fined by cops.

In graffiti the focus is laid on the name itself and the complexity of the tag⁵⁹ as these are used as a sort of alter ego for the artist to be known and respected by others as they become better, more omni-present and gain fame⁶⁰. You could say that these public signatures are a way of marking a territory and that they aren't meant for the great public as their use would be misinterpreted and misunderstood, unless you're part of the same subculture as the artist. On the next page there are a few examples of graffiti tags.

55 + 56 + 57 Urbanario. "Urban Interventions" (visited on June 10, 2011) (<http://urbanario.es/archives/954>)

58 + 60 Kataras, Alex, (2006) "Master's thesis: Advertising, Propaganda, and Graffiti Art". (visited on June 10, 2011) (<http://www.graffiti.org/faq/kataras/kataras.html>)

59 De Block, Eva. 2010. Today's illustration: the rebirth of illustration?



cartoon graffiti by Mr Stack, Ivry City, 2006 (<http://keusta.net/blog/index.php/2006/10/11/308-cartoon-graffiti-art-character>)



"Picasso, Dada, Picabia and Magritte", artist unknown, 2010
(http://textarthistory.files.wordpress.com/2010/11/graffiti-tag-collage_1440_x_900.jpg)

Street art or post-graffiti emerged out of its predecessor as young artists got inspired by it, only these artists mostly have an interest or an education in art and are older than the early graffiti artists⁶¹. Unlike their forerunners, these artists are much more subtle and anonymous in their work⁶² and as they have been influenced by propaganda and advertising they use a wider range of languages and methodologies in order to communicate with the general public⁶³.

They question today's society and want their work to communicate emitted themes such as adusting, subvertising and other forms of culture jamming next to the growing concern for the environment, with the idea of abolishing the private property of public spaces and reclaiming the streets⁶⁴.

Street artists use cheaper, simpler and quick to use tools, such as stickers, stencils or street posters⁶⁵ next to the traditional spray-can. My previous thesis emphasised two well-known street artists, namely Banksy and Shepard fairey, thus explaining what street art consists of. In a nutshell Banksy⁶⁶ makes satirical and subversive artwork with political and social commentary, this combined with dark humour. He uses stencils with humorous images of rats, monkeys, policemen, soldiers, children and old people in combination with slogans of anti-war, anti-cop or anti-establishment messages.

Shepard Fairey⁶⁷ stimulates the curiosity of people through sticker campaigns, as he wants people

61 +62 + 64 + 65 + 66 + 67 De Block, Eva. 2010. Today's illustration: the rebirth of illustration?

63 Urbanario. "Urban Interventions" (visited on June 10, 2011) (<http://urbanario.es/archives/954>)

to question both sticker and their surroundings. The purpose of these stickers is to cause a reaction. They often provoke frustration amongst some people who want to peel it off because they can't stand the mere sight of it. This is quite ironic as people are confronted with advertising and commercial graphics on a daily basis, far more than they are with street art, and you don't see people tearing down an advertising poster. Below are a few examples of the work of these artists.

Banksy



Artwork of Banksy in Bethlehem, by Amar Awad, Reuters 2007 (<http://www.abc.net.au/news/photos/2007/12/04/2108770.htm>)



Banksy graffiti removal, 2008 (<http://ethur.org/wp/blog/?m=200809>)



One of Banksy's art works on the wall, posted in 2008 (<http://alemdocubobranco.wordpress.com/2008/02/>)



One of Banksy's stencils in Palestine on a security wall in Bethlehem, posted in 2007 (<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-499346/Graffiti-artist-Banksy-strikes--Bethlehem.html>)



Banksy's Art of War with two kissing policemen, date unknown (<http://sole-hiphop.wordpress.com/2008/10/02/art-of-war-banksys-revolution/banksy-11/>)

Shepard Fairey



Obey Giant poster, by Elizabeth Daniels, 2008 (<http://perdidojournal.blogspot.com/2008/04/andr-giant-has-posse.html>)



Obey Giant sticker, by joo0ey, date unknown (<http://www.takepart.com/news/2009/09/11/question-everything-shepard-fairey-on-his-influences-his-legal-battle-with-ap-and-being-a-sellout/>)



Shepard Fairey's André the giant, in 2008 (<http://perdidojournal.blogspot.com/2008/04/andr-giant-has-posse.html>)

Urban intervention is a new style less widely practiced than graffiti or street art but nonetheless important in this field. It consists of “reclaiming the public and city space” with provoking and playful installations in the urban environment by using all sort of elements of rural landscapes and the modern city⁶⁸. It challenges people to rediscover their surroundings and to interact with it in new ways.

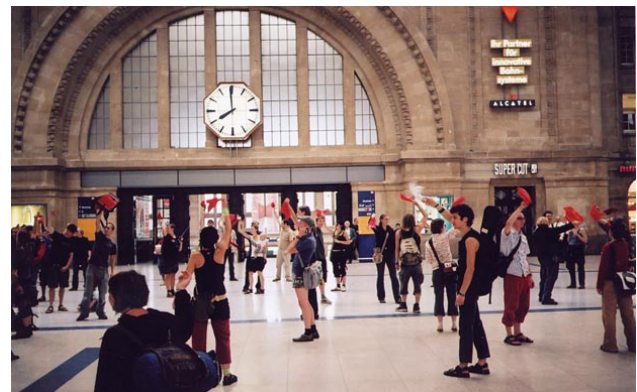
To me, the concept of interaction on such level is a very interesting component of this art form as I mentioned the importance of interaction in advertising before. It is also an essential part of my project.

These artists, like street artists, go up against the commercialization of public spaces⁶⁹, only here they go a little bit further than a stencil or a sticker on a wall. It includes guerilla art, video projections, art interventions, street installations, flash mobbing⁷⁰, etc... as these artists use the city as their canvas.

It appears that the projects don't really have much meaning beyond being entertaining and conceptually interesting, but they have the ability to change people's looks on their daily environment and that's what the mission is all about.

Below and on the next page there are a few examples of urban intervention Installations.

The different aspects on the subject of interaction will be tied together in the next chapter.



Ligna, “Radio ballet” in Leipzig, 2003. Klanten, Robert. 2010. Urban Interventions: Personal projects in public spaces. Berlin: Gestalten. P196

68 + 69 Gestalten. “Urban Interventions” (visited on June 10, 2011) (<https://shop.gestalten.com/index.php/catalog/product/view/id/703>)

70 Klanten, Robert. 2010. Urban Interventions: Personal projects in public spaces. Berlin: Gestalten.



Simone Decker, "Chewing gum in Venice", 1999. Klanten, Robert. 2010. Urban Interventions: Personal projects in public spaces. Berlin: Gestalten. P120



Slinkachu, "The Lair". Klanten, Robert. 2010. Urban Interventions: Personal projects in public spaces. Berlin: Gestalten. P 86



Slinkachu, "What brings us together and keeps us apart", Grottaglie, 2009. (<http://www.mutualart.com/OpenArticle/Big-Wonders-of-a-Small-World--Miniature-/17FFA7262EA9026A>)



Sprinkler Brigade, "Stranger on a train". Klanten, Robert. 2010. Urban Interventions: Personal projects in public spaces. Berlin: Gestalten. P 88

Sprinkler Brigade, "Risotto-negro", New York, 2006. Klanten, Robert. 2010. Urban Interventions: Personal projects in public spaces. Berlin: Gestalten. P 89

This last urban art style is a new form of urban engagement that goes beyond graffiti although both styles share some sub-cultural elements⁷¹. Both type of projects communicate with people who share the same secret language, and that really want to see urban art projects.

In addition to this, both art styles have been influenced by technological evolutions, such as the Internet. These styles are mainly distributed by blogs and web magazines, making it a global culture and a shared experience.

But urban intervention is a much more subtle and constructive discipline of urban art as it consists of independent and anonymous work. Urban intervention projects are a product of a process in which the physical and social aspects of a particular location are studied. This process generates an action that adds elements to the landscape or modifies existing ones in a dialogue between the artist and his context⁷².

As you can see graffiti and street art are more identity based styles of urban art, as the creativity tends to evolve around what the artist puts forward while urban intervention is freed from the use of that identity as it focuses exclusively on the context⁷³.

Urban art and its different styles were previously discussed in order to clarify what it consists of. The question remains what its relationship is with advertising?

3.1.2. Urban art and advertising

When talking about urban art I would like to refer to street art and graffiti since these styles show the most resemblance with advertising. Moreover it is street art's mission to make fun of propaganda, as it is considered to be advertising's main tool in a society where identity is very important, as ad agencies sell lifestyles in the form of popular culture⁷⁴.

Street artists consider advertising to be the tool that the dominant elite employs to promote their money making agenda and shape the public opinion as it plays a central role in a society where people have been growing up in a visual landscape of materialist culture. The main mission of these artists is to reclaim the city space as a reaction against commercial advertising or a need to leave a personal mark on their environment. You could consider urban art as a form of subverted advertising to prove that the propaganda tool can be used by anyone, and not just by the dominant elite with their capitalistic agenda. It is the artist's way of re-examining city spaces and to challenge the ownership of space in a battle against the 'giant billboards'⁷⁵.

But despite the fact that these artists are against it and want to reclaim the public space with their artwork, these fields show a lot of similarities.

Firstly they are both considered to be visual clutter in urban landscapes, only advertising is paid for and legal, thus permitted, whereas urban art not and still considered as vandalism⁷⁶.

Secondly urban art borrows from the principles of signage and the jargon of advertising campaigns. You could consider a graffiti tag as a logo or a whole wall piece as an advertisement poster with a message, as they must differentiate themselves from others and stand out amongst the visual clutter just like their commercial opponent. Advertising and urban art both rely on the amount of coverage or penetration of a message and the quality of delivery, as once a tag or a logo is reproduced enough times it will become recognizable and will be saved in the minds of people. Both fields use repetition to get their ideas across, only urban art work is considered to be more genuine and human than commercial logos⁷⁷.

71 Pop up city. "Urban Interventions" (visited on June 10, 2011) (<http://popupcity.net/2010/06/book-review-urban-interventions/>)

72 + 73 Urbanario. "Urban Interventions" (visited on June 10, 2011) (<http://urbanario.es/archives/954>)

74 + 75 + 77 Kataras, Alex, (2006) "Master's thesis: Advertising, Propaganda, and Graffiti Art". (visited on June 10, 2011) (<http://www.graffiti.org/faq/kataras/kataras.html>)

76 De Block, Eva. 2010. Today's illustration: the rebirth of illustration?

Thirdly urban artists have adopted local and global campaigns⁷⁸ just like in advertising. Look at the British street artist Banksy who has travelled to Palestine to leave his mark on the great wall or to the USA to leave a blow-up doll in a Guantanamo Bay jumpsuit on the grounds of Disney World.



"Bansy tags Palestine", August 5, 2005. (<http://lifewithoutbuildings.net/2005/08/banksy-tags-palestine.html>)



Exit Through the Gift Shop, Reviewed by Alison Ross, July 27 2010. (<http://clockwisecat.blogspot.com/2010/07/no-exit-banksys-inescapable-charade.html>)

As you can see these two fields are quite alike and are only separated by a thin line. It appears that they are playing the same game only that they are playing in opposite teams⁷⁹. Advertising is driven by immediate financial profit and is mediated by big companies and stockholders in order to expose their products in an appealing way and sell them, whereas urban art is the work of creative individuals with their own non-profit goals who wish to expose their work through guerrilla tactics. Although it still has an outlaw status and it is still considered a deviant culture, it has become assimilated with mainstream, as it consists of elements of rebelliousness and beauty, which are very marketable.

Just like the field of advertising, this field has undergone changes. Urban artists have found new and easier ways to operate local and globally, and the field of advertising itself has started to adopt some elements of this subculture to diffuse their messages.

Urban art is a very potent tool that has mainly been used by the masses until not so long ago corporate environments noticed its potency and tried to co-opt it in their communication as they seek new ways of reaching today's difficult consumers through the visual clutter⁸⁰, which is something most urban artists aren't too keen on. This type of advertising is called graffiti advertising⁸¹ in the marketing world. Here a company logo and brand message, or image is integrated in an artwork by the urban artist, which is placed on leased walls or billboard spaces. Consumer or entertainment products that are targeted at a youthful market frequently use this type of advertising, as urban art is something very popular amongst youngster who wish to develop an identity and feel part of something⁸². Generally there is a connection between the promoted product and the urban culture, which in my opinion makes sense, as the message of a product would get lost if it weren't connected to that target audience. Not everyone finds the urban culture appealing.

Graffiti advertising is considered to be very cheap but in fact it isn't, as legal graffiti advertising involves leasing advertising space, which can cost quite a lot. Also a lot of energy needs to be put in the creation of awareness amongst graffiti artists and the organization of any complementary events.

Like in every other type of advertising there are certain conditions to the success of a

78 + 79 + 80 Kataras, Alex, (2006) "Master's thesis: Advertising, Propaganda, and Graffiti Art". (visited on June 10, 2011) (<http://www.graffiti.org/faq/kataras/kataras.html>)

81 + 82 Marketing minefield. "Graffiti Advertising" (visited on June 10, 2011) (<http://www.marketingminefield.co.uk/unusual-ideas/graffiti-advertising.html>)

campaign. Two examples of graffiti advertising campaigns will illustrate this idea. One campaign was successful, and the other not.

Mickey “Pop Culture Re-Integration” campaign

This campaign by StreetVirus Agency for Disney Consumer Products appeared to have an overwhelming success. The objective was to reintegrate Mickey Mouse into popular youth culture through wild-posting, guerrilla video projections and a series of artist designed street art murals in trend-setting neighbourhoods throughout Los Angeles, New York City, and Toronto⁸³. A lot of black and white movie images were used confusing people into questioning whether it was advertising or not.



Disney Consumer Products “Pop Culture Re-Integration” for StreetVirus Agency. (http://www.altterrain.com/Disney_Pop_Culture_Marketing.htm)

Sony PSP graffiti advertising campaign

This campaign⁸⁴ on the other hand was a disaster. Sony paid owners of buildings and put up graffiti around the world to advertise the PSP and get the kids to buy their products. Unfortunately for Sony the campaign back-fired, as people of the urban culture community saw it as stealth advertising and started to react by defacing the ads with taglines such as “Corporate vandals not welcome⁸⁵” or other forms of rebellion shown in the pictures below.

This is a clear example of the battle that urban artists are fighting against advertising.



⁸³ Alt terrain. “Disney pop culture marketing” (visited on July 18, 2011) (http://www.altterrain.com/Disney_Pop_Culture_Marketing.htm)

⁸⁴ Indy media. “Sony PSP” (visited on July 25, 2011) (<http://www.indymedia.ie/article/73593>)

⁸⁵ Marketing minefield. “Graffiti Advertising” (visited on June 10, 2011) (<http://www.marketingminefield.co.uk/unusual-ideas/graffiti-advertising.html>)



Wooster's Growing Gallery of Defaced Sony PSP Graffiti Ads, 2005. (http://www.woostercollective.com/2005/12/woosters_growing_gallery_of_de.html)

Although both campaigns were graffiti advertising campaigns, there was a very big difference between them. This led to the success of one and the failure of the other. Sony didn't give the artists any freedom and told them what to do, while Disney gave them free license to design what they wanted⁸⁶. This proves that this form of advertising is more about involvement than control and if it is accepted by the urban culture, the campaign is likely to be highly successful. Urban artists always smell when something is corporate so in the interest of both parties it is preferable for the corporate world to invite artists and give them the freedom to create their work.

Every type of advertising has its advantages and disadvantages and the choice of a certain strategy depends on elements like the product that needs promoting, the message, the context or the audience. As the market has become so diverse, a wider range of advertising strategies is needed to communicate effectively with consumers.

Advertising remains a delicate subject amongst urban artists, and it is my opinion they are on the right track when communicating around subjects like global warming, globalization and the Middle East. But advertising in its pure sense means communicating, and advertising for non-profit and other organizations does exist. These organisations often stand for the same ideas as the street artists. In view of this shared idea, it would only be logic that the corporation and the urban artist join forces to get their message through.

The next part will handle the topic of character design, the emotional value it conveys followed by some examples of how this concept is used in advertising.

3.2. Character design

Next to the subject of Urban Art, being one of the pillars of my projects, it is as important and interesting to describe the concept of character design.

⁸⁶ Marketing minefield. "Graffiti Advertising" (visited on June 10, 2011) (<http://www.marketingminefield.co.uk/unusual-ideas/graffiti-advertising.html>)

3.2.1. What is character design?

Character design is the process of creating and giving life to a character. These characters can be used in a comic book, in a game, in animation, for a toy, or even for a company or a product. It reaches out to various different fields with the character being the binding element between all those worlds⁸⁷.

The organisation to refer to when talking about character design is Pictoplasma⁸⁸. This Berlin-based organisation is dedicated to the art of character design and is notable for bringing it into the mainstream. Also, it has been mapping the growth of this field since 1999, and has defined it as a new sub-field within design and illustration.

Character design appears to be a fairly new discipline⁸⁹, although you have probably already noticed some colourful characters years ago, like Tony the tiger and Coco the monkey on Kellogg's cereal products, when wandering the aisles of a super market or when opening a cupboard at home.

At the beginning of the 20th century, many companies noticed that making characters out of their manufactured products could be a beneficial marketing tool⁹⁰. As a result they started to promote their company's features through a company character. Just look at old corporate mascots like the 'Michelin man', the Jolly green giant, or even Mickey Mouse. These were characters that could captivate the public's imagination and whom people could look up to as heroes, instead of looking at the boring grey company behind them. It also made it easier to involve and entertain children, whom today have an exceptionally strong influence on the decision makers.

In the 1980's the age of video games appeared thanks to the arrival of the digital age. People started creating characters like Pac-man, Donkey-Kong, the Mario brothers and Sonic the hedgehog for the video game industry. It became such a success that at a certain point there was more money to make in the game industry than in the movie industry⁹¹. The field has been growing ever since.

Followed by this trend was a growing desire for toys that emerged from Japan and Hong Kong, where collectable toy figurines were replicated from popular Manga comics, followed by the three-dimensional replication of video game, comic book, animation and movie characters⁹². I can still remember my brother's collectable figurines of the Star Wars movies that he used to put in my pink Barbie jeep. Most toy collectors would keep those figurines in their proper boxes on their shelves in order to keep their value.

Then one day Michael Lau, a Hong Kong based artist, appeared on a toy show with customized Urban GI-Joe figurines which he had dressed in cool street wear and accessories.

According to the creator of Jeremyville⁹³, his appearance started the whole phenomena around creating plastic toys with a touch of youth culture, hip-hop, street art and skate fashion⁹⁴. Thus the concept of urban vinyl was created, which quickly became 'designer toys' in the early 90's.

Today designer toys are quite expensive toys or collectibles, produced in limited editions by artists who have a background in graphic design, illustration or 'low-brow' art⁹⁵, who aim their creations at 'Kidults'. These are adults or big kids who refuse to grow up. Next to plush, cloth and latex dolls, these toys are mainly made out of materials such as ABS plastic and vinyl, followed by the less used wood and resin⁹⁶.

87 Boehnert, Jody, "Emotion Graphics". Eye Magazine 62, Winter 2006. (visited on June 10, 2011) (<http://www.eyemagazine.com/feature.php?id=134&fid=606>)

88 Pictoplasma. "About" (visited on July 25, 2011) (<http://pictoplasma.com/>)

89 + 90 + 91 + 92 + 94 Computer Arts, "Adding character". (visited on June 10, 2011) (http://www.computerarts.co.uk/in_depth/features/adding_character)

93 Jeremyville. "Home" (visited on July 29, 2011) (http://www.jeremyville.com/home/jeremyville_home.html)

95 Underground art

On this page and the next there are a few examples of designer toys and their price, from famous toy designer companies like Kidrobot or Critterbox, next to a few of my own creations.



MUNNYWORLD
MEGA MUNNY
18-INCH TEAL EDITION
by You!

\$200.00 Qty

BUY

[VIEW CART](#) [ADD TO WISH LIST](#)
[CONTINUE SHOPPING](#)

Mega Munny, 18-inch DIY toy from Kidrobot.
(<http://www.kidrobot.com/Toys/DoltYourselfToys/MUNNYWORLD-MEGAMUNNY18InchTealEdition.html>)



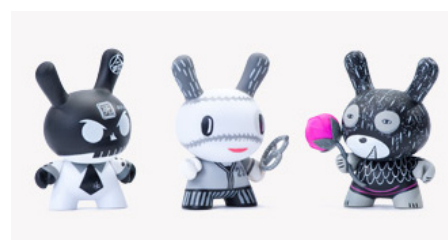
MUNNYWORLD
MINI MUNNY
4-INCH WHITE EDITION
by You!

\$9.95 Qty

BUY

[VIEW CART](#) [ADD TO WISH LIST](#)
[CONTINUE SHOPPING](#)

Mini Munny, 4-inch DIY toy from Kidrobot.
(<http://www.kidrobot.com/Toys/DoltYourselfToys/MUNNYWORLD-miniMUNNY4InchWhiteEdition.html>)

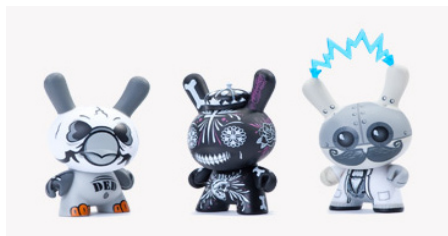


2TONE DUNNY SERIES
3-INCH
by Various

\$9.95 Qty

BUY

[VIEW CART](#) [ADD TO WISH LIST](#)
[CONTINUE SHOPPING](#)



2tone Dunny, 3-inch DIY toy from Kidrobot.
(<http://www.kidrobot.com/Toys/MiniFigures/2ToneDunnySeries3Inch.html>)

The first two toys are DIY toys you can decorate yourself, from the 'Munny' series by Kidrobot. The figured '2 tone Dunny' series toys are toys that have already been decorated by various artists. The fully designed vinyl toys on the next page are from Critterbox. As you can see if you want a bigger toy, you will have to pay the price.



PRODUCT DETAILS : PULP
 Item no. CBX200426
 30 cm (12 in) tall
 Rotation molded vinyl
 Duncce stool included
 Artist-illustrated collector box

PRICE: \$80.00 USD

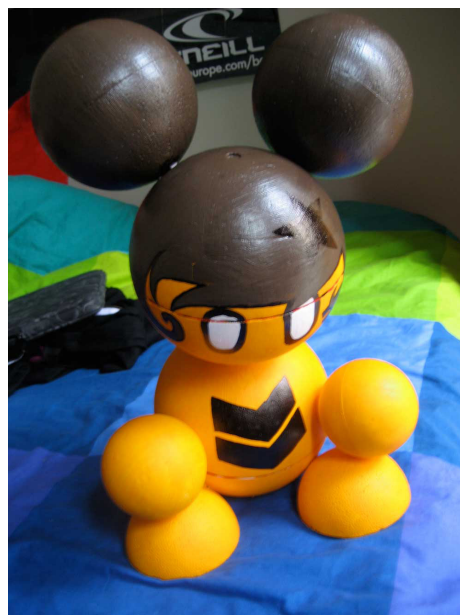
Copy cat, designer toy from Critterbox.
 (http://www.critterbox.com/detail_cat.html)



PRODUCT DETAILS : LIL' COPY CAT
 Item no. CBX200427
 30 cm (12 in) tall
 Rotation molded vinyl
 Duncce stool included
 Artist-illustrated collector box

PRICE: \$80.00 USD

Pulp, designer toy from Critterbox.
 (http://www.critterbox.com/detail_pulp.html)



Images by Eva De Block.

The last pictures on the previous page are pictures of my “Trooper dolls” that I started making for a drawing assignment a few years ago. Unlike regular vinyl toys, these are made out of Fimo, a sort of plasticine that needs to be baked in order to become hard. I guess it’s their handmade and somewhat deformed appearance that people find appealing and that differentiates them from other designer toys.

As mentioned before, the field of character design is very successful and has been evolving and expanding throughout the past decades. One can ask what makes these creatures so appealing and why people are willing to spend so much money on the figurines themselves, on clothing, games or toys based on these characters.

In his article “Emotion graphics” for Eye magazine winter’s issue in 2006⁹⁷, Jody Boehnert stated that character design was the new international visual and narrative language. As these cool abstracted little creatures made a direct appeal on the emotional attention of people, and by their constant presence in books, art, street art and even advertising, their creators were creating a new global language that tried to avoid the written word in a saturated world full of visual clutter.

It is interesting to look at the relationship the artists have with their characters, as some characters are merely created to answer a brief, while others present a more personal embodiment of the creators personal ideas resulting in a higher degree of subjectivity and a translation of their feelings⁹⁸. Take Nathan Jurevicious for example, he is an Australian artist that struggles with his role as a parent and that subsequently created the character ‘Scarygirl’⁹⁹, a girl that got washed up and abandoned on a desert peninsula, who is on a determined mission to find the man behind her haunting dreams¹⁰⁰. Through comic books, toys and online games Nathan Jurevicious is able to bring the story of his character, Scarygirl, to life¹⁰¹.



Scarygirl by Nathan Jurevicious.
(<http://alienonion.blogspot.com/2009/04/scarygirl.html>)

It appears that these created characters can express emotional contents in an efficient manner as their creators intend on giving them real life with their own background story¹⁰² and fantasy world¹⁰³. But what effect do these characters have on people that make them so desirable? A well-designed character appeals to all ages and all kinds of people as they allow people to have an emotional connection with them.

Firstly because they are so varied and because they offer a certain factor of nostalgia that take people to old memories, whether it is an old cartoon or an old picture book they loved when they were children.

97 + 98 + 99 + 102 Boehnert, Jody, “Emotion Graphics”. Eye Magazine 62, Winter 2006. (visited on June 10, 2011) (<http://www.eyemagazine.com/feature.php?id=134&fid=606>)

100 + 101 Scarygirl. “About” (visited on July 30, 2011) (<http://www.scarygirl.com/>)

103 Computer Arts, “Adding character”. (visited on June 10, 2011) (http://www.computerarts.co.uk/in_depth/features/adding_character)

It may be the reason why characters that have their roots in folklore fairytales or comic books, stick out from the rest, as people already made an emotional connection with those stories during their childhood¹⁰⁴.

Secondly because the most simple of these characters have elements of personality in which people can easily identify themselves or others. So the more a character has a personality and a story, the more people are likely to identify themselves and create an emotional bond with it¹⁰⁵. As for designer toys, the same explanation is valid, only they have a strong tactile element allowing people to touch it and play with it, creating an even stronger emotional bond. People like touching things, even if it is just to hold it for a bit and then putting it on their shelves as decoration. For that reason you see a lot of “don’t touch” signs in shops.

I guess when designing a character, it doesn’t suffice to make it cute or cool, but it is however important that those creatures have a strong personal story to which people can relate and that engages their imagination unlike the passive programming on television. This is mandatory in a field where it is important to stick out because there are just so many different characters. Besides an overview of the world of character design it would be very interesting to look at the use of these characters in the field of advertising. This is mostly referred to as commercial character design, which is the process of creating characters and using them to enhance or publicise a commercial product or service¹⁰⁶.

3.2.2. Character design and advertising

As stated earlier, character design has already been used in the past to promote manufactured products and to make them more appealing. Today you’ll find them anywhere in this visually cluttered world, whether it is on products, on advertisement billboards, in animations on the Internet¹⁰⁷ or even as mascots. Just look at Ronald MacDonald, the primary mascot for Mc Donald’s fast food restaurant chain who in television commercials inhabits a fantasy world called McDonaldland, with his friends¹⁰⁸.

Below are a few examples of characters that were specially designed for advertising campaigns followed by existing advertising campaigns, where use was made of character design.

A first one is a concept campaign for Nike¹⁰⁹ designed in cooperation with Mat Cloud. He states that no matter what somebody looks like and no matter how strong that person is, if you love sport you can do it like his monster does.

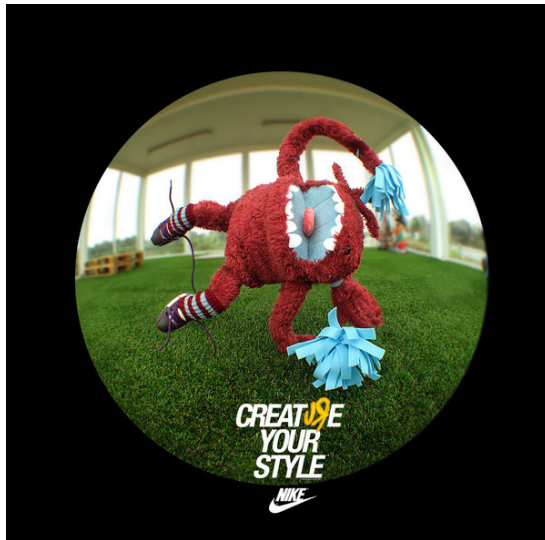


104 + 105 Spence, Nick, “Create perfect characters”. Computer Arts. (visited on June 10, 2011) (http://www.computerarts.co.uk/in_depth/features/create_perfect_characters)

106 + 107 Wikipedia. “Commercial character design” (visited on July 29, 2011) (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commercial_Character_Design)

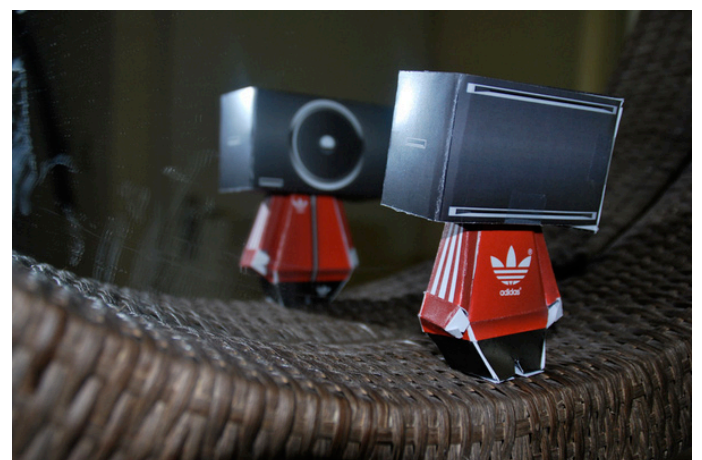
108 Wikipedia. “Ronald Mc Donald” (visited on July 29, 2011) (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ronald_McDonald)

109 Toy design served. “Nike: create your style” (visited on July 27, 2011) (<http://www.toydesignserved.com/gallery/creature-your-style/720688>)



Create your style monsters by Mat Cloud for Nike. (<http://www.toydesignserved.com/gallery/creature-your-style/720688>)

Another example is a school assignment for Adidas¹¹⁰ for which a Dutch student named Sean Valies designed a paper toy.

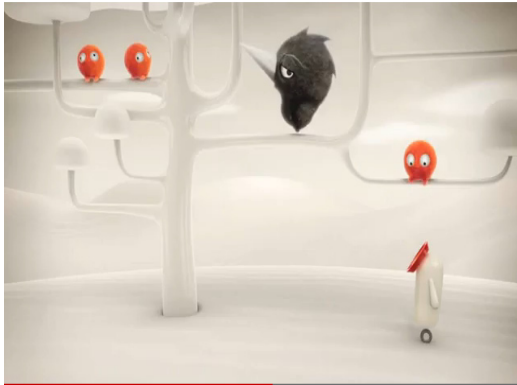


Paper toys created by Sean Valies for a school assignment. (<http://www.toydesignserved.com/gallery/Adidas-Paper-toy/1302655>)

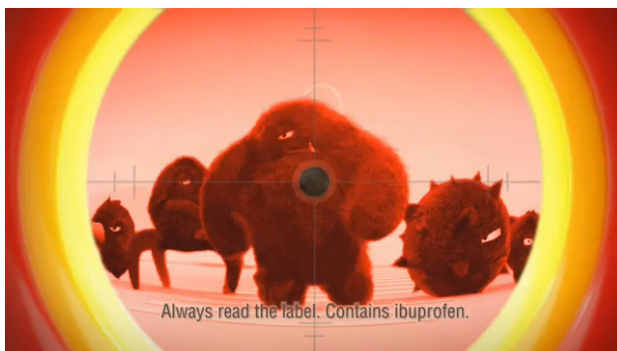
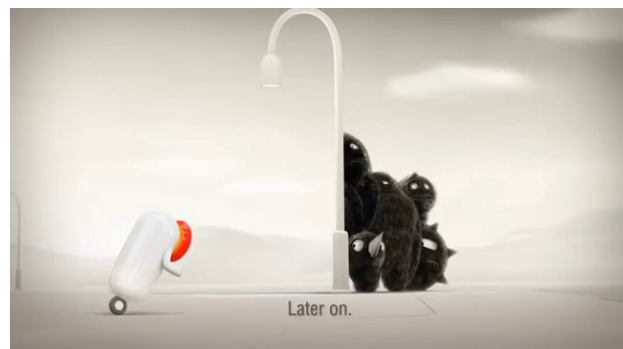
These two examples of characters were specially designed for advertising campaigns. Examples of advertising campaigns where use was made of character design will be shown on the next page.

¹¹⁰ Toy design served. "Adidas paper toy" (visited on July 27, 2011) (<http://www.toydesignserved.com/gallery/Adidas-Paper-toy/1302655>)

One example is the Nurofen television campaign where characters were used for the animation spot. In order to visualize pain they depicted dark fluffy monsters. Under the effect of Nurofen those monsters turned into cute colourful and fuzzy creatures.



Screenshot from the Nurofen 'Conform' advert, by the agency Mother. (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i2JWlcgu7Ag>)



Screenshot from the Nurofen 'Headaches' advert, by the agency Mother. (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o5ey8poS4Ts&feature=related>)

Another example is the famous Opel Corsa TV ad with the knitted "C'mon" dolls created by the German artist Boris Hoppek¹¹¹. These knitted dolls featured as a fictional rock band in Opel's viral marketing campaign to promote the fourth generation of the Corsa, with their songs composed solely of the word "C'mon".



C'mon dolls by Boris Hoppek for the Opel Corsa campaign. (<http://newglitzontheblog.blogspot.com/2011/04/schrager-character-walk.html>)



C'mon dolls by Boris Hoppek for the Opel Corsa campaign. (<http://www.deriddercommunicatie.nl/arachna.aspx?id=60>)

¹¹¹ Wikipedia. "The C'mons" (visited on July 30, 2011) (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_C'mons)



C'mon dolls by Boris Hoppek for the Opel Corsa campaign. (<http://www.arabalarmax.com/araba-opel-corsa-c'mon!-275.htm>)

In my opinion the urban art theory, using genuine artists to make an advertisement and giving them the freedom to make it, applies here as well. It seems to me that the more freedom the creator gets the more interesting his character will be. As a result the advertisement will reach a more receptive consumer crowd. Another approach is to let artists create and sell their characters and ideas to big commercial companies.

Indeed character design has been around for a while and has proven to be very popular, but I think that the field of advertising hasn't reached the full potential of today's character design yet. Except for the famous C'mon commercial and taking existing marketable images of products like Kellogg's Tony the tiger, Coco the monkey or Smacks the frog, there aren't that much original advertising campaigns yet with specially designed characters. This field remains wide open for future original initiative.

Character design will remain an inherent aspect of modern graphic design and it is hard to ignore or to quantify what further impact it will have on commerce or entertainment¹¹². Only one thing is sure, just like other fields it must continue to diversify, spread out, stick out and stay fresh.

This chapter has described two important concepts that are, each in their own way, related to the world of advertising as they are used by advertisers to make their commercial messages more attractive and exceptional. The first one because it belongs to a certain underground culture, making it cool for certain market segments, the second one because it can create an emotional bond between the character and a person. By using these concepts advertisers will have more chance of their commercial messages being noticed by consumers despite the existing visual overload.

Advertisers however should be aware not to overuse these concepts in their communication as they could saturate their effectiveness. Also some artists aren't too keen on the advertising world, so advertisers will have a harder time convincing them. Again advertisers will have to think twice before choosing a certain strategy for their commercial communication, it all depends on the message they wish to convey.

In the next chapter I will describe my master project which is based on the two concepts that were highlighted above.

¹¹² Computer Arts, "Adding character". (visited on June 10, 2011) (http://www.computerarts.co.uk/in_depth/features/adding_character)

IV. My master project

The previous chapters discussed today's field of advertising, with recent trends that led to changes in the field. Important concepts were also explained in order to situate my project. In this chapter these separate subjects will be linked to become one coherent idea.

A first part will define the problem that this project is trying to solve. A second part will bring an insight in some previous campaigns that have been conducted to solve that particular problem. The chapter will finish with a description of what I have achieved until now in order to reach my objectives.

4.1. Definition of the problem

For my project I chose to work around the litter problem in Brussels, as it is a growing problem for which no one has really found an effective solution yet. Brussels is known as a dirty city, and littering remains a serious problem in many places of the capital. By litter I mean carelessly discarded refuse, such as wastepaper, cigarette butts, cans, wrappers, etc... In other words, everything people just drop on the ground instead of disposing them in the rightful garbage cans.

People keep on throwing waste on the floor without thinking about the consequences. Waste attracts waste and in the end this visual pollution harms the attractiveness¹¹³ of the capital.

Once people dispose of their litter, they find it repulsive, although it was theirs in the first place, and they start complaining about the fact that their city is filthy. People need to learn to handle their waste in a positive way. Either they put it in their pockets or bags, and later throw it in the rightful garbage cans so it can be properly recycled later, or they do something with it and give it a new life. For example, in poor countries, some people make bags from wrappings and wastepaper, or toys from disposed cans.

I wondered how I could sensitize people so they would stop throwing their litter in the streets or make them look at waste in a different way. Before moving on to describe my accomplishments so far, it seems interesting to look at previous campaigns around this particular problem.

4.2. Previous campaigns

One major campaign you might have noticed is the “in de vuilbak¹¹⁴” campaign by OVAM and FOST Plus. This campaign was put together to confront the Flemish part of the population with their responsibilities in a playful manner¹¹⁵, focussing on mobile people and coastal tourists. The campaign consists of different actions throughout Flanders, which people can follow on the website. Slogans like “who throws a banana on the ground is a monkey” or “who throws a cigarette butt on the ground is a jellyfish”, were used in newspapers, magazines, radio or television spots and in outdoor advertising such as bus flanks or trams. Next to this, posters were spread throughout Flanders, with extra focus on the coast and train stations. These posters feature the before mentioned slogans using images and special typography rather than plain text, as shown in the pictures on the next page. The last poster of this sequence is the current poster, which people can personalize on the website by putting the name of their street they wish to keep clean.

113 A la poubelle. “Zwerfvuil campagne” (visited on June 10, 2011)
(<http://www.alapoubelle.be/campagne.html>)

114 In de vuilbak. “Zwerfvuil campagne” (visited on June 10, 2011)
(<http://www.indevuilbak.be/>)

115 Vlaanderen. “Zwerfvuil campagne” (visited on June 10, 2011)
(<http://www3.vlaanderen.be/jacom/communicatiejaarverslag-artikel-2010/zwerfvuilcampagne>)



Poster for the “Zwerfvuil in de vuilbak” campaign by Saatchi and Saatchi. (<http://www.brecht.be/MILIEUGROEN/Campagnes/ZappalndeVuilbak/tabid/802/language/nl-BE/Default.aspx>)



Poster for the “Zwerfvuil in de vuilbak” campaign by Saatchi and Saatchi. (<http://www.neerpelt.be/content/press/record.php?ID=1218>)



Poster for the “Zwerfvuil in de vuilbak” campaign by Saatchi and Saatchi. (<http://www3.vlaanderen.be/jacom/communicatiejaarverslag-artikel-2010/zwerfvuilcampagne>)



Poster for the “Zwerfvuil in de vuilbak” campaign by Saatchi and Saatchi. (<http://www3.vlaanderen.be/jacom/organogram-2010/term/3110>)



Current poster for the “Zwerfvuil in de vuilbak” campaign by Saatchi and Saatchi. (<http://www.indevuilbak.be/>)

Wallonia conducted a similar campaign¹¹⁶ that in my opinion was less extensive and less playful than the Flemish campaign. Their objective was to reach and sensitize a maximum of target groups, through coherent and structured actions, in order to put an end to ‘wild littering’.



Poster for the “A la poubelle” campaign in Wallonia (http://www.fostplus.be/about_Fost_Plus/Pages/Campaigns.aspx)



Poster for the “A la poubelle” campaign in Wallonia (<http://braine-le-comte.skynetblogs.be/archive/2009/11/11/dechets-et-depots-sauvages.html>)

Another campaign, also an initiative of OVAM and FOST Plus, was “The King of trash” campaign, where Flemish youngsters were invited to partake in a competition and to make a spot that shows people that there is a cool way to handle trash¹¹⁷. Unfortunately I couldn’t visit the website nor check out the winning clip, as the campaign was conducted in 2007 and it isn’t available anymore.

These examples prove there have been previous efforts to sensitise people about littering. Unfortunately they haven’t generated the effect the initiative takers were looking for¹¹⁸. In order to initiate an effective change of behaviour amongst people, one needs to look at the problem in detail and respond with adapted efforts.

It appears that these campaigns are only aimed at the two main regions of Belgium, Wallonia and Flanders. Brussels being the capital of Europe and Belgium, should be considered as a different target group and as such deserves attention through a customised campaign. As littering is considered to be a serious problem and people constantly complain about a dirty city, the question rises if there aren’t any better and more effective ways to communicate and get the message across around litter, in the centre of Brussels.

¹¹⁶ A la poubelle. “Zwerfvuil campagne” (visited on June 10, 2011) (<http://www.alapoubelle.be/campagne.html>)

¹¹⁷ Cd & V. “Zwerfvuil campagne” (visited on June 10, 2011) (<http://www.cdenv.be/node/1392>)

¹¹⁸ Joke Schauvliege. “Zwerfvuil campagne” (visited on June 10, 2011) (http://www.jokeschauvliege.be/pers/toespraken/start_zwerfvuilcampagne_indevuilbak/)

4.3. The actual project

In order to tackle the litter problem in Brussels I came up with a project, consisting of different elements to form one coherent campaign .

A first step was to create characters made out of waste. Waste being the main problem I wish to campaign against, I discovered that it could also contribute to the solution. By using litter for my characters I give it a second life and doesn't end up in the streets. This step rests on the concept of cradle to cradle¹¹⁹ where things are reused in an effective way so they don't end up 'dead' in a cradle to grave cycle.

By giving waste a face and somehow bringing it to life, it speaks for itself and might result in a more effective way to communicate with people about the litter problem in the capital. It is indeed a more interactive way of communicating with the target group and as such it has a greater chance of reaching them.

With this in mind I created 'the nainkes'. These creatures can be considered as city gnomes that arise from litter and that live in garbage containers. At night they come out to do all kind of chores in order to make the city a better and cleaner place. But although they have been doing this for a long time, people keep on adding extra trash without second thoughts. As a result the nainkes got fed up with it and thought it time to take matters in their own hands by taking to the streets and revolting.

As they come to life, every nainke has its own character and its own way of talking, which allows them to have a personal interaction with people.

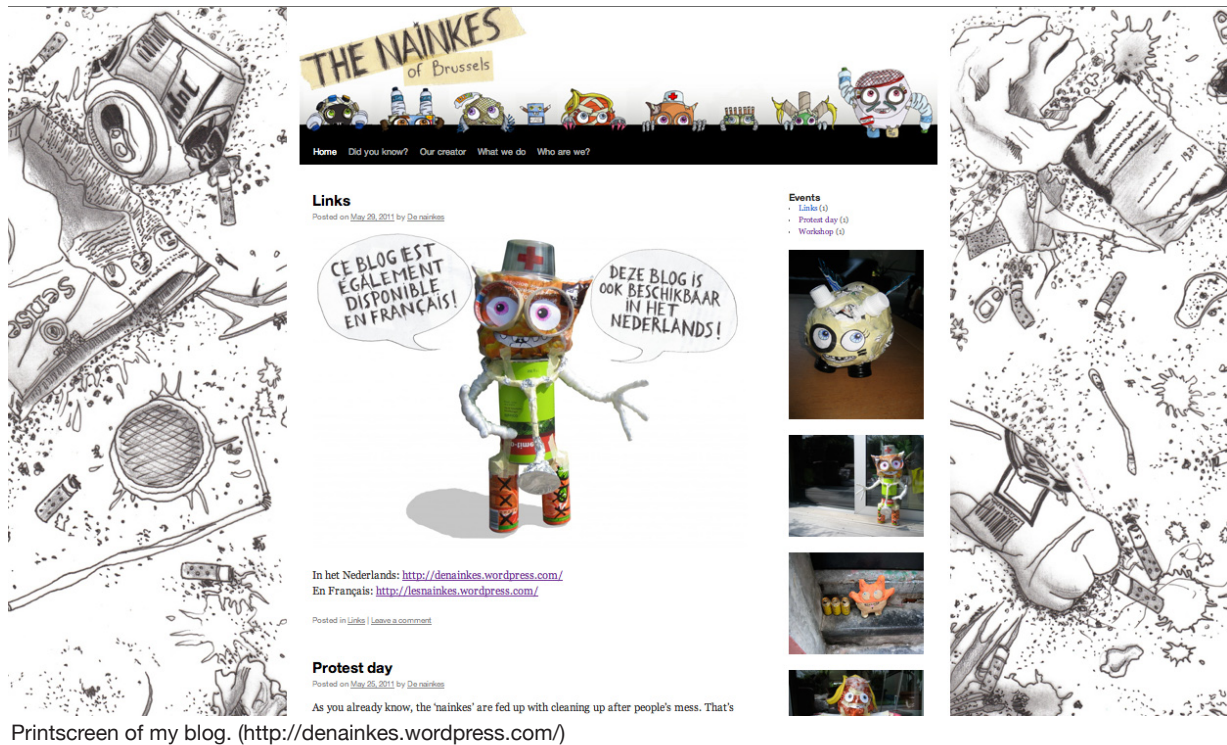
Below are a few images of my creations.



In order of appearance; Gérard, Josiane, Pino and Gertrude.
Images by Eva De Block.

¹¹⁹ Braungart, Michael & McDonough, William. 2009. Cradle to cradle: remaking the way we make things. London: Vintage.

Once the creation of my characters was accomplished, I started working on a blog. It is supposed to function as an interactive platform where people can get information about my project and on the story of these creatures. They can also discover each character, follow their actions and post reactions. This blog is available in English, Dutch and French as I wish to communicate with the residents of Brussels in all their diversity. Below is a print screen of the blog. It isn't finished yet but with the featured images, slogans and the drawings of litter in the background I hope it becomes clear at first glance what the campaign is all about.



I also organised a workshop with school children in a school where a friend of mine teaches. I asked the children to collect waste at home and to bring it to school so they could work with it in a playful manner and make their own 'nainke'. While doing this, they give a second life to the waste they brought in and learn how to deal with waste in a different manner. It is my opinion that these kind of activities help them to get aware about this problem at a young age. It is indeed at that age that they start forming their habits and that as a result a change in habits is most likely to bear results in the long run. Everyone knows that it is hard to change a habit once we are used to it. That's why it is important if not mandatory that they learn about the consequences of littering at a young age and that we show them how to handle waste in a positive way. This means, throwing it in garbage containers and not on the floor or sorting it in order to be recycled, or pointing out that it still can be useful and give it a new life. I found this experience a very fruitful one, as the children were very excited and eager to make their own character and participate. Of course some are more motivated than others and one or two days aren't enough to change a certain habit. Below are a few pictures of the workshop. You can always check the rest of them on my blog¹²⁰.



Images by
Eva De Block.

¹²⁰ <http://thenainkes.wordpress.com/>

The final part of my campaign, which I still need to realise, is sort of a guerrilla act in the streets with my characters. You could consider it to be part of an urban intervention, like the artist Slinkachu did when placing tiny figurines in the streets.

This street campaign consists of a more interactive way of communicating by placing the nainkes in various places of the centre of Brussels where people can clearly see them. I intend to let them communicate with people and their surroundings, or more specifically with street furniture, through their expressive faces and through playful messages that I will attach to them. I will also attach a label or a tag referring to my blog, so people can go take a look, be engulfed in the world of the nainkes and hopefully react.

During my street campaign I will be filming the reactions of people, and document it. It will be interesting to see whether people are amused and entertained by the sight of these funny looking creatures; irritated, or even shocked as it are things that supposedly don't belong there and that you can't easily avoid. This is similar to the irritation some people can experience when seeing a sticker they can't place, as I have mentioned before in the part about urban art. There is also the possibility of people stealing a character, kicking it around or even destroying it. One can't predict the reaction of people.

It also seems intriguing to see how far you can go with the positioning of these characters. Will putting them at the bottom of an escalator for example result in people putting them or kicking them aside? Or do they just walk over it?

Finally I intend to interview some passers by to ask them what they think about litter and my project to solve the littering problem. All this documentation will be available on my blog for people to see and to follow, but also to present to the master jury.

Hopefully this campaign will touch people in a way that inspires them to change their behaviour in keeping their city clean. In doing so it makes the place more attractive for everyone to enjoy it. Who knows my stunt might even generate some local media attention, and by such reach more people which would translate in a greater awareness and motivation to do the right thing. It is a very slow process, but as people say: 'Rome wasn't built in a day'. And with enough effort we might get a more liveable city in the future.

In the future I hope to share my idea with institutions like the city of Brussels or even OVAM and FOST Plus. This way it is possible to keep the story of the nainkes alive. Organising actions in the streets, setting up workshops for children or even adults, and searching for new ways to use these characters are some of the many possibilities. This project isn't set in stone; it can be expanded in many ways as these organisations see fit. A few months ago I sent my idea to someone who works at INTERZA, an umbrella organization that takes care of garbage in various communities around Brussels. The spokesperson was very interested and enthusiastic about my project, and wanted me to contact her again when my project was completed. Who knows what the future holds.

V. Conclusion

My introduction discussed emotional interactivity, and its importance for the improvement or alteration of relationships between people. It is important for advertisers to take this type of interactivity into account in order to make a successful campaign and influence people's actions.

The first chapter was about the changes the field of advertising has seen in these past two decades. Traditional forms of advertising have lost their power and attractiveness, adapted themselves and made way for new and more attractive forms of advertising in order to reach today's difficult consumers. Four major factors contributed to these changes: the saturated consumer who learned to block out advertising messages; the new service-oriented and mass-customization market; the rise of new media; and finally resulting from these previous factors, the cut backs in traditional advertising budgets and rise in importance of integrated marketing communication.

Taking these factors into account, I mentioned a new advertising approach in which interactive and emotional advertising are keys to successful campaigns. Not only are they far cheaper than their predecessors but they also have a greater effect on today's active consumer. To define the limits of these types of advertising and to indicate how far advertisers are willing to go to reach consumers, I later mentioned the concepts of culture jamming and shockvertising.

It appears that every type of advertising has its limits and that the success of a campaign depends on the product, the context, the target group and the message one wishes to convey.

In the second chapter I talked about the different urban styles and pointed out the similarities and differences between street art and advertising, as these are two opposite teams that play the same 'propagandic' game.

Since this is a field that fascinates me, I highlighted the importance of creating characters and their influence on people's emotions. I also mentioned the interest it generated from the field of advertising, as advertisers started to employ these concepts to reach certain target groups. Of course the use of it has certain limits.

Throughout these two chapters I pointed out the importance of interactivity and emotions, as they have a great influence on the decisions and attitudes of people. It was equally important to discuss these issues as a background to my master project and what I wish to accomplish with it.

The field of advertising will continuously have to evolve and adapt itself to its surroundings. Advertisers will constantly have to take various and changing elements into consideration, in order to ensure the success of their campaigns. It is therefore mandatory that they keep on being innovative and put the consumer in the first place, considering his desires and emotions. It is through this constant interactivity between consumer and advertiser that one will be able to evaluate which strategies are successful and which ones aren't. Next to this, advertisers must keep in mind not to overuse certain concepts or strategies as the effect or popularity can easily wear off and eventually turn to dislike with the consumer.

The key to success lies with those advertisers who keep their ear to the ground and skillfully play to the wishes of the consumers.

As for my project, at this point I cannot say if my own campaign will be a total success, as it is not completed yet. But I am sure that it is original enough and that it will generate enough attention and amusement for people to be moved by it and to not block it out like they do with most advertising messages. In the end they might even be enticed in changing their bad littering habits. But as I said before 'Rome was not built in one day', and it will take more than one action in the streets to bring my message through and to change the behavior of people for that matter.

Although my intentions were never to work in the field of traditional advertising, this thesis has broadened my knowledge of advertising and has brought me one step closer to finding my place in this large and diverse world. Next to this it shows that there are many options to explore in order to get a message through. Of course people always prefer doing the things they like to do which in my case is dealing with urban art and character design.

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