

## Persuasive Techniques in Advertising

The persuasive strategies used by advertisers who want you to buy their product can be divided into three main categories: **pathos**, **logos**, and **ethos**.

**Pathos:** an appeal to emotion.

An advertisement using **pathos** will attempt to evoke an emotional response in the consumer. Sometimes, it is a positive emotion such as happiness: an image of people enjoying themselves while drinking Pepsi. Other times, advertisers will use negative emotions such as pain: a person having back problems after buying the “wrong” mattress. **Pathos** can also include emotions such as fear and guilt: images of a starving child persuade you to send money.

**Logos:** an appeal to logic or reason.

An advertisement using **logos** will give you the evidence and statistics you need to fully understand what the product does. The **logos** of an advertisement will be the "straight facts" about the product: One glass of Florida orange juice contains 75% of your daily Vitamin C needs.

**Ethos:** an appeal to credibility or character.

An advertisement using **ethos** will try to convince you that the company is more reliable, honest, and credible; therefore, you should buy its product. **Ethos** often involves statistics from reliable experts, such as nine out of ten dentists agree that Crest is the better than any other brand or Americas dieters choose Lean Cuisine. Often, a celebrity endorses a product to lend it more credibility: Tyler Swift makes us want to switch to T-Mobile.

### Other Strategies: Additional Advertising Terms and Definitions

- **Avante Garde** – The advertiser suggest that the product will put the consumer ahead of the crowd by having the product first.
- **Bait and Switch**--When an advertiser attracts the attention of the consumer with a low-priced product or service but then encourages the consumer to buy a higher-priced one.
- **Bandwagon** -- When a consumer is attracted to a cause, agrees to join an organization or club, or purchase an item because its popularity. The consumer is persuaded to “follow the crowd” rather than to use “evidence” to justify a choice.
- **Bias**--An inclination of temperament or an outlook. A personal and sometimes unreasonable judgment that consumers have already made about a topic, product or person.
- **Card Stacking** – When an advertiser stresses only the positive qualities and does not tell any of the negative ones. The consumer is given only one side of the story about a product.

- **Emotional Word Repetition** -- When a consumer is conditioned to remember or persuaded to buy a product or service by repeating, again and again in different tones, the name of the product or service.
- **Facts and Figures** – When an advertiser uses statistical evidence and facts to prove that a product is better than another product.
- **Glittering Generalities** – When a consumer is persuaded by specially chosen words that can have many different positive meanings. The advertiser implies that using their fabulous product will make the consumer's life wonderful.
- **Jingle**--A light, rhythmical verse or short song used by advertisers.
- **Magic Ingredients** – When an advertiser implies that a scientific or miraculous discovery makes the product outstanding.
- **Patriotism** – When an advertiser implies that buying the product will show a love of country.
- **Persuasive Techniques**--A strategy or method that a person, group or company uses to persuade the consumer to agree with the author or speaker's point of view.
- **Plain Folks** – When an advertiser implies that the product is a great value for everyday, "plain folks."
- **Propaganda**--The spreading of ideas, information or rumor for the purpose of helping or injuring an institution, a cause or a person.
- **Simple Solutions** – When an advertiser implies that the product will help the consumer to avoid complex problems, or the one product will fix several problems.
- **Slogan**--Catchword or motto used by an advertiser.
- **Snob Appeal** – When an advertiser implies that the product will make the consumer part of the rich, famous or elite group.
- **Stereotyping**--A standardized mental picture that is held in by members of a group that represents an oversimplified opinion, prejudice attitude or uncritical judgment.
- **Target or Intended Audience**--The age group and gender that the author wants to persuade.
- **Testimonial** – When an advertiser connects a famous or respectable person with a product through the use of quotations or endorsements from that famous or respectable person.
- **Transfer** -- When a consumer is persuaded to buy a product or service because it is associated with something attractive or respectable.
- **Weasel Words** -- When an advertiser uses words to imply meaning or facts without actually making a guarantee.
- **Wit and Humor** – When the consumer is attracted to a product because the advertisement makes them laugh, or it is entertaining.