

Essay on The Uses and Abuses of Advertisements

A glance at any newspaper will reveal hundreds of advertisements. Some are elaborate full-page displays while the majority are in the more economical classified sections. People and firms advertise for all sorts of reasons. We can read about job vacancies, new products, people wanting to sell or purchase houses and cars, announcements of births and deaths, lonely hearts looking for partners, home services and others. The list goes on and expanding every day.

The uses of advertisements are undisputed. Large companies depend heavily on advertisements to make their products known to consumers. These companies play a major role in the development of sports in our country. Without them acting as sponsors we would not be able to stage international sporting events.

Most magazines and periodicals survive because of advertisements. The people or firms that advertise provide the necessary finance to keep these magazines running. Both parties benefit. The publishers get to carry on their business and the advertisers get to sell their products. However, some magazines seem to lose their original purpose after a while because they have too many advertisements.

For an employer looking for workers, advertisement provides one of the most efficient methods of getting them. How else can an employer let job-seekers know that there are jobs available? Through advertising in the newspaper, the whole country can be effectively reached and the best of the job-seekers selected.

It is the same when people want to sell or buy houses, cars and other things. Through advertisements, they can come in contact with people not normally met in normal daily life. Again the best buyers or

sellers can be picked out and the most suitable bargains reached. In short advertisements enable people to widen their choices and chances in whatever they wish to obtain or discard.

As useful as it is, advertisements are sometimes abused by unscrupulous people.

Misleading the public is the most common form of abuse of advertisement. Consider some of the deceptions employed by advertisers:

In the midst of an international sports meet, we see the omnipresent sign of a popular-brand cigarette. Everyone knows that smoking does nothing good for one's health. Yet these advertisers blatantly ignore facts and promote their products nonetheless. Even the authorities turn a blind eye to, the whole affair. Nowadays the advertisers have begun to disguise their advertisements. Instead of the direct approach to cigarettes, they go in a roundabout way by advertising fashion, good-living and other aspects of "success".

On television, the abuse of advertisements is most apparent.' Who can bear sitting through ten minutes of continuous bombardment by shampoos, hair creams, snacks, washing powder, and underarm spray? It is just too much! What is worse, they always come just before the most exciting part of a program! Besides giving us a mental jolt they methodically numb and abuse our minds until we watch them without actually seeing and hear their chatter without actually listening. It would certainly be for the good of all viewers if the advertisers cut down on their advertisements and only advertise discreetly. Presently advertisement on television is based on hard-selling and relentless assault on the viewers.

Furthermore how much of what they advertise are based on truth? Does using a certain brand of shampoo eliminate dandruff? My personal

experience is a definite no. Does consuming certain food make us healthier? Then why are the hospitals always full? Does using a certain brand of soap powder really make clothes cleaner? Does owning a certain type of car really make the owner happier? Such things we must ask if we do not want to be taken in by the advertisements.

Thus we see that advertisement can be useful as well as it can be destructive. It depends on how it is used. People advertise because they need to. It is only when they advertise falsehood and misleading information that abuse comes in: We cannot escape this onslaught of advertisements, but we can use our own intelligence to weed out the bad ones.