

Manipulative marketing: persuasion and manipulation of the consumer through advertising

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Abstract. *The manipulation through advertising became an issue the consumers are facing on almost a regular basis. This practice move away the mission of marketing that of meeting the needs of customers and widens the asymmetries of power between the company and the consumer.*

Many of manipulative advertisements are difficult to prove because of their controversial nature and content. This paper is about how the companies use the stimuli, the techniques and the mechanisms of advertising to manipulate the consumers. At the same time, it advances some suggestions about the diminishing of the manipulative practices. The effectiveness of these solutions will depend on the observance of some principles by the companies which advertise in areas where they and the consumers can find mutual goals and interests.

Keywords: manipulative advertising, manipulative techniques, deceptive advertising, fallacious arguments, emotive persuasion, conscious consumer, conscious advertising.

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1. Introduction: Stimuli of consumer manipulation through advertising

The marketing is directing the business according to the point of view of the customer seems the marketing concept which best throws a light upon the market goal of the company. In other words, the company should focus permanently on the consumers needs. The companies have their interests and objectives which many times are far from aligning with what the consumers need, and, quite often, don't hesitate to make up marketing solutions which misconduct or deceive the consumers, in order to achieve them. The most appropriate area of marketing for such practices is the communication. The marketing communication is a mix of tools for promoting the products by transmitting particular messages to the consumers aiming at persuade them to purchasing those products. The advertising is the element of communication mix which offers all needed means, tools and ways of action for promoting the marketing objectives of the company. If a company deliberately decides to manipulating the consumer through advertising, in order to achieve its objectives, it could take into account some stimuli or preises which will ease the concrete advertising activities.

A first stimulus consists in the good knowledge of consumer s purchasing behavior and the capability of the company to influence it. The advertising focus on the process and mechanism the customer uses for making the purchasing decision. This purchasing decision process has the meeting of the consumers needs as unique motivation. As Maslow has established, the consumers have three categories of needs. The first category includes the *utilitarian needs* such as the need of shelter, nourishment, and security. At the next level are the *social needs* like to be accepted by others. At the top, we can find the *psychological needs* which make the consumer behaving in certain ways that are consistent with his self image and that enhance his self image to others. The functions of advertising could be linked to different mixes of needs. There are many and various functions the advertising could fulfil such as identification of the product, its differentiation from others, consumer s information which induces the consumer to try new products, suggests the reuse, builds brand value, preference and loyalty (Danciu, 2009; Fowles; gov.2009.wordpress.com/2011/07/29/ad-lecture-3-functions-of-advertising-consumer-needs/). All these functions of advertising prove useful to influence the purchasing decision process of the consumer behavior if the advertising succeeds to persuade the consumer to prefer, purchase and use the product and to become loyal to it.

Another strong stimulus for consumer manipulation through advertising is the capability and the extent of alteration of the mechanism of advertising which aims to persuade the consumer. The persuasive advertising could be divided into two

types which are non-manipulative and manipulative advertising. The non-manipulative persuasion through advertising consists in simply presenting the product or service, in the best possible light. The advertiser doesn't need to lie, omit details or intimidate the consumer. This type of advertising is truthful, that is the facts presented are real, the information is giving in a clear, logical manner, in order to convince by informing (Grover, 2011). The informative and persuasion functions of advertising are based on facts and emotional arguments. The informative advertising gives factual information to the consumer, while the emotional advertising consists in an emotional game which has as goal to favorable influence the decision of the consumer. There are many situations when combined alternatives are needed and they consist in various emotional games which are used as arguments for a certain way of acting on target-groups and individual consumers. Every time when these advertising efforts are focused on getting the consumers to do what the advertiser wants through subversive manners that lack the truth, we can say this is manipulation. Where the advertiser try to persuade the consumer by giving him facts for example, if it is a manipulator may make up or imply facts.

The non-ethical behavior of the advertisers is also a stimulus for manipulation through advertising. The issue of manipulative persuasion in advertising brings out the discussion on the role of ethics. The ethics of marketing has in view to what extent the marketing behavior, decisions and practices fit the rules and principles of good conduct. The advertising practices must have a set of ethical principles that could help the managers to evaluate the moral importance of each action and to decide how far they could go, in order to stay just on line of ethics. The research of the subject highlights three dominant principles of ethics in advertising which obey the law, act in your self-interest and comply with the ethics (Craig Smith, 2000; Danciu, 2009; Gray, 2011). It is not disputed that the advertisers have as obligation to obey the law and to act in their enlightened self-interest. However, many of the present practices of advertising show that are an increasing number of cases when there is no alignment of the marketer s self-interest with customers' interest. There are numerous situations when the companies try to induce the customers the feeling that they maximize the customer s satisfaction through manipulative advertisements. All these arguments support the idea that the law and the self-interest are not sufficient guidelines for good conduct in marketing advertising. The advertisers must also be guided by ethics, especially by normative marketing ethics that is prescriptive, identifying moral principles and methods of moral reasoning that justify rules and judgments of what is right and wrong (Craig Smith, 2000).

2. The manipulative advertising inside the spectrum of the persuasive advertising

In order to show how the persuasive advertising could become a manipulative one, we should answer to the question of what is the range of persuasion which goes in advertising. Since the persuasion is both rational and emotional, the manipulation area that can be utilized in advertising may emerge from the spectrum of persuasion conceived by Creighton (people.creighton.edu). The spectrum of persuasion Creighton proposes shows versions of persuasion occurring from the least rational (coercition) to the most rational (rational persuasion) as in Table 1.

Table 1. *The spectrum of persuasion in advertising*

Coercition/Force	Manipulation	Rational persuasion	Factual information
Threat	Deceitful advertising	Logical arguments	Qualities
Physical violence	Fallacious arguments		Price
	Emotive persuasion		Display

Source: people.creighton.edu, p. 6.

The first type of manipulative advertising is *the deceitful advertising* which uses facts, but deceptive facts. It uses confusing, misleading or blatantly untrue statements when promoting a product, that's why this advertising is also known as false advertising. Facts are given, but they are either false or there are significant facts which are hidden or not mentioned. Another sort of manipulative advertising is that uses arguments, but *bad arguments*. *The emotive persuasion* is the type which is likely more common and it play on consumer emotions and usually threaten him with dangers or promises amazing results, either of which are questionable, at best. Products like diet pills or exercise equipment sold through infomercials or TV often promise amazing results, and so persuade through sponsoring hopes and visions of happiness. In the same category may be included the advertisements which promote the so called "traditionally made" products. The ads highlight the ingredients and the methods used in the old days and imply they are used for the advertised products too, but these claims rarely are true. The same methods of manipulation may be found in some of green advertising. The green ad claims have more potential than any other type of claims to mislead and deceive the consumers. A misleading or deceptive advertisement is known as "green washing" which is misleading marketing about environmental benefits of the product (Stokes, 2009). The consumers appreciate the green corporate activities and as long as a company is true to its word and truth-in-advertising is uphold the companies who act in a socially and environmentally responsible manner may be rewarded (Rayan, 2012). The consumers are likely to accept green

advertising claims because of their strong desire to improve the environment and their way of life. But even the consumers with high levels of green concerns are not able to detect misleading or deceptive claims better than other consumers. The rapid increase of the green claims for a wide range of products and services create confusion among consumers. A great diversity of misleading and deceptive claims is used by the companies which have not truly green products and try to manipulate consumers. All claims with manipulative role that can be used in advertising no matter the product could be included in the following categories: vague or ambiguous claims, claims that omit important information necessary to evaluate their truthfulness or reasonableness, claims that are false or outright lies, and various combinations of the previous categories.

3. The manipulative advertising at work

3.1. The most claims used with a manipulative role

The ultimate goal of all types of advertising is to persuade the consumer to purchase a product or service. The manipulative advertising intends to do that by using facts, arguments and plying with consumers emotions in a misleading and deceptive manner. The most claims used in manipulation through advertising are the exaggeration of the quality of product, fallacious arguments and emotional appeals.

Exaggeration of quality. An exaggeration can be nothing less than false information about the product, but it can also be a form of puffery. Puffery is the term used to denote the exaggerations reasonably to be expected of a seller as to the degree of quality of his product, the truth or falsity of which cannot be precisely determined. At the same time, puffery is “advertising claims that ordinary consumers do not take seriously” (Berinato, 2010). Claims such as “world best (cup of) coffee” or “king of beers” are examples of puffery in the manipulation by advertising. The puffery seems to influence the people who are not major consumers of the product but turns away the consumers who are experts or have relatively high knowledge. These observations show that such exaggerations are not very useful for achieving the goals of advertising campaigns. The puffery could attract some new consumers but it could lose many consumers which are loyal to the product.

Fallacious arguments. A fallacy is any error in reasoning that occurs with some frequency (Teves, 2009). The fallacies or poor arguments can be made ignorantly and intentionally. The second situation is of greatest importance in marketing

advertising because of its potential for consumer manipulation. The advertising fallacy consists in using reasoning errors when creating, displaying or transmitting messages to the consumers. The fallacies which could be used in advertising fill up a long list; the fallacies of credibility are an important category which can largely be used in advertising.

Emotional appeals are the claims playing with consumers emotions both at conscious and unconscious level. In the advertisements can be included appeals to the need to achieve, dominate, feel safe, nurture, satisfy curiosity, the need of sex, the need of affiliation, guidance, prominence, attention, autonomy, physiological needs such as food, drink, sleep and so on. The advertisers can speculate on the consumer emotions and the ads are work out in such a manner that seem to promise or imply a possible connection between a product and happiness, social acceptance, a good family, a good sex life intimate friendship and so on. They may also use the scare for capitalizing on panic, if necessary. A large –scale contagion provides “the best” opportunity for companies to perk up the profits. One example is the antibacterial hand gel. Many companies have capitalized on health scares like the swine flu and SARS by connecting their sanitizer products to these outbreaks. A company from US, Lysal, speculated during the swine flu scare. They said on their website that while we don’t know how the virus spread, “following proper hygiene routines can help prevent the spread of illness”. So they insinuate that using antibacterial soap will prevent people from getting specific illness. But, while hand sanitizer sales amplified, these products actually do nothing to defend against contagions. Both viruses are spread via tiny droplets in the air there are sneezed or coughed by people who are already infected (Tartakovsky, 2011). Some companies take further steps to target panic over these viruses by updating their products or launching new ones. Kleenex came out with “antiviral tissues” which are “virucidal against Rhinoviruses Type 1A and 2; Influenza A and B; and Respiratory Syncytial Virus” or whatever that means.

All previous categories of claims are substantiated in advertisements using linguistic, visual, auditory techniques and various combinations as vehicles for creating manipulative messages.

3.2. Mechanisms and techniques of manipulation in advertising

3.2.1. Manipulation through language

As Harris (1989) suggests, we may think about advertising as the construction of semiotic worlds for the rhetorical purpose of swaying purchasers buy what is advertised. The manipulation of the linguistic form and structure implies linguistic material beginning with smaller or most discrete of segments or forms and leading the quite large linguistic entities will be fashioned to undergo some change, transformation, mutilation, mutation that is relatively unexpected on the part of the reader or viewer. The advertisers bring some elements of information into prominence and, concomitantly, other elements are systematically back grounded or disappear from linguistic string entirely. They adhere at two essential principles in practically all linguistic manipulations. First, one component such as sound or word-form of lexical item-is almost every time manipulated inside a construction and, every broken rule or manipulation is operated at several levels being, therefore, inextricably bound up amongst several entities. Secondly, the viewer must be familiar with the environment of the ad visually on one hand, and linguistically on the other hand.

The most important and effective linguistic manipulation is that of subliminal advertising which aims at the subliminal seduction of the consumer. The basic concept of subliminal seduction in advertising makes possible for consumers to receive information on an emotional level without even being aware of it (www.research-assistance.com/paper/18372_a_ra_default/). The consumer behavior does not depend only of the conscious reaction. His reaction depends also by what non-conscious mind orders or decides, and this is the base of subliminal perception (Tanski, 2004). The consumer ignores the role of unconscious perception of subliminal knowledge that manipulates, direct and control the human behavior. The advertisers are aware of this and they use it to their advantage. They manipulate the consumer's decision by using techniques that interfere with subliminal knowledge and alter it toward the advertiser's objective. The use of any persuasive method to influence on the consumer's thought process may be called manipulation which time when the advertiser has the intention to win and the consumer to lose. This sort of action is facilitated also by the strong belief of many consumers they are immune to advertising and they are prepared not be fooled into buying the products in the ads.

Another motive of such conduct consists in the reality that many of today's products are "parity products" which all or most are nearly identical like beer, gasoline, soap, soft drinks cold remedies and ads help create an illusion of

superiority. The creation of the illusion of superiority of one product could use two major language techniques that are the use of the comparatives “better” and “best” and the effort of making the consumers believe something about the product that is not true. The word better is legally interpreted to be a comparative and therefore becomes a clear claim of superiority. In certain countries, the word best can be used to describe the parity products because if all products are equally good, they can all be considered the best. But, in order to not manipulate the customer, the only time when better can be used is when a product does indeed have superiority over other products in its category or when the better is used to compare the product with something other than competitor brands (malleryk.wordpress.com/writing...). Making the consumer believe something about the product that is not true is another technique with great potential of manipulation in advertising. Two major categories of claims that can be used to make the consumers believe something about the product that is not true are “the weasel claim” and “the unfinished claim” which focus most on the linguistic aspects. The weasel claim involves a modifier, a weasel word that negates the claim that follows it. Some of the most common weasel words include helps virtually, acts, can be, up to, refreshes, comforts, fights, the feel of, the look of, fortified, enriched and strengthened. These words modify the claims that follow them by being subtle enough for consumers to not notice them. The common weasel words perform various categories of functions. A sense of action or of doing something important to consumer is suggested by the words like “helps” and “acts”. That is because the words sound as if the product is being proactive toward the desired result. In the expression “helps control dandruff” for shampoos, the word helps acts as the claim no longer control dandruff but it helps control the dandruff like a good friend might. The prepositional phrases like “up to”, “the feel of” and “the look of” imply either an upward trend or a similarity between products. If the claim is “save up to 30%”, the phrase up to is often overloaded as the consumer will save 30%. Additionally, the “up to” has a sense of rising motion in it which translates in consumer as an overall good feeling. “Can be” and “virtually” are phrases that can note the possibility of the product being the claim says it is. The expression “leave dishes virtually spotless” can make the consumer to take it as “leave dishes spotless”. Another function that weasel words perform is to give one product the illusion of strength. “Fortified”, “enriched” or “strengthened” are words that fulfill this role by often describing products that the consumers normally think of as strong and powerful. Other prepositional phrases such as “the feel of” and “the look of” are intended to make the consumers think that the product is of high quality or is similar to another product because they imply a comparison between two things.

The unfinished claim suggests that the product has more or is better than something, but does not say what “something” is. The unfinished claims could rely on “more”. A clear example is the expression “20% more cleaning power” which could be interpreted as either “20% more cleaning power than competing brands” or “20% more cleaning power than earlier version of the same product”. The fact that it does not specify what product has 20% more cleaning power renders the claim meaningless.

3.2.2. Visual techniques of manipulation

Many advertisements which are placed in practically in all media relay on visual and combined techniques to manipulate the consumers. Some of the most used such techniques are the manipulation by photo shopping, the mixture of the amusement with ads, the manipulation of the size and the price of the product and the misleading graphs.

The manipulation by photo shopping. The advanced technique offers a large variety of solutions in visual advertisements and their manipulation. The photo shopping is a technique where photos or photographs are edited in ways in which create an illusion or a different look and feel of the raw image and making it interesting for advertisements. Such technique can be achieved by using photo and vector editing soft wares like Photoshop, Illustrator, Corel and Gimp and many others. In contrast by simply editing like enhancement and corrections, the photo manipulation often includes creative retouching like adding 3D elements, backgrounds, vectors, and other sleek vibrant colors (ninjacrunch.com/40-cool-face-...). The colors play an important role in manipulative ads, since they have meanings and emotions tied to them just like words and images. The warm colors such as red, orange and yellow can represent passion, happiness and energy, while the cool colors like blue, green and violet are used to create a sense of peace, serenity, health and security (Brown, 2010). The advertisers should take into account some basic rules that seem to be universal in the choice of the colors. The primary colors like red, yellow and blue tend to emphasize simplicity as well as speed. The secondary colors are created by mixing two primary colors together. These include green, orange and purple. The tertiary colors can be created by mixing secondary and primary colors together. When choose colors the advertisers have in mind to create consistency, to highlight content, and to emphasize the most important features of the product. If they want manipulate the consumers, the advertisers are mixing the images and colors together in such ways that can persuade and direct the consumers to purchase the product by deceiving and misleading them (For manipulation in advertising see 37 Examples of Photo Manipulation In Advertisements, www.Designyourway.net/37-examples-of

photo-manipulation-in advertisements/). By manipulating photos and colors in advertising, the feelings and emotions can either fully express or be masked, and the products can be presented in the light and colors which positively influence the consumer. L'Oreal used the photo manipulation in the ad for Mabeline products featuring the star Julia Roberts and the supermodel Christy Turlington. The company has been forced to pull ad campaigns after complains that the images were overly airbrushed. L'Oreal UK admitted that the Turlington's image has been "digitally retouched to lighten the skin, clean up makeup, reduce dark shadows and shading around the eyes, smooth the lips and darken the eyes brows" (Sweeney, 2011). The ad for Mabeline featured Turlington promoting a foundation called The Eraser which is claimed to be an "anti-ageing" product.

The mixture of the amusement with ads. Some food companies disguise their ads as entertainment. This is especially appealing to kids on TV but the adults like it too. These games are inherently addictive from nature and allow the advertisers to circumvent the regulations on advertising junk food on television. The biggest US cereal companies General Mills or Kellogg's used games to peddle their last nutrition cereals (Tatarkovski, 2011).

The manipulation of the size and the price of the product. When the sales and the profits become lower, shrinking the size of the product is a technique that may be used. The change of the size of the product at the same price is useful when the size is shrinking. One of the most known sweets producers in US used such technique. They have a seasonal candy which is one of the most popular treats around the Easter, The Cadbury Crème Egg that is just a chocolate shell shaped like a chicken's egg with a sugar white-and-yellow filling inside. When the sugar prices started eating into their profits, with consumers unwilling to pay more, the people of Cadbury tried do something. So they shrank the eggs and told consumers that they are simply misremembering how big they were before. Because the eggs are a seasonal item, in 2006 when the company shrank the size of the eggs they posted a message on their website saying that the eggs hadn't gotten smaller, the consumers' hand and mouth had just gotten bigger or as they phrased "you have just growing up". That meant that Cadbury was giving everyone less for their money. The company was forced to change their website messaging to the incredibly vague statement they offer a "broad variety of sizes and flavors of products" (Smallwood et al., 2012).

The misleading graphs. The graphs can be manipulated to mislead being excessively complex or poorly constructed. The misleading graphs are often in false advertising using techniques such as improper scaling, axis lack of scale, omission of data and improper extraction (Boussa). The improper scaling creates a

perceptual leading-comparison, while the change of y-axis maximum how the graph appears by causing a misleading of less volatility, less growth and less steep line a lower maxim. The lack of scale or the improper units make unclear the graph. Additionally, the tick marks prevent the reader from determining the graph bars are properly scaled, and allow the manipulation of the graph bars to create or mitigate the expression of change and just the same effect have the omission of data or the improper extraction of data.

4. Conscious advertising for conscious consumers, a realistic solution against manipulative advertising

Many of the manipulative actions in advertising are difficult to prove. Anyone encounters many difficulties when trying to counteract manipulative ads. More, the regulators tend to be reactive and his give the advertisers some space to update the content of their manipulative advertisements. It is difficult to say if harder regulations will reduce the natural tendencies for manipulation through advertising. Therefore, other ways should be followed in areas where the marketers and the consumers can find mutual goals and interests.

Consciousness in consumption asks for conscious advertising. For the greatest importance in reducing the manipulation through advertising seems to be the consciousness in consumption and business. The conscious consumer is that consumer which presents a complex mix of responsible behaviors in terms of economic, social and environmental and sustainability concerns. This type of consumer rationalizes the unnecessary and even the unwanted consumption by saying that is for a good cause. The conscious consumption is an ethical one at the same time and gives it the character of a consumerism activism that is practiced through *positive buying* which ethical advertising and products are favored. A business could successfully communicate and have relationships with conscious business, in its turn. Such a business has its consciousness that is the ability to experience the reality, to be aware of its inner and outside world. The consciousness allows the business to adapt to its environment and act to promote its interest and goals in a fair and non-manipulative way. The most important component of the outside world of the business is the consumer which has tremendous impact on the achievement of its interests and goals. The business cannot ignore the conscious consumers in all respects. The company has to well know and understand the conscious consumers, if it wants to succeed in making conscious advertising. The better they comprehend the intentions, the methods and the messages of deceptive and misleading advertising, the consumers easier

can distinguish between truth and fallacies or lies. Bomprad and Baranowski (2007) suggest that five values drive the conscious consumers and these are health and safety, honesty, convenience, relationships and doing good. The conscious consumers insist that the companies are honest, that is they reliable and accurately detail and promote the features and the benefits of the products. When the companies make unsubstantiated claims or over promise benefits, they risk breeding cynicism and distrust. The dynamics of the realities about the conscious consumers should have a strong impact on the commercial advertising. The companies have to learn the lessons emerging from the values of conscious consumers and their evolution in the future and create advertising messages accordingly. Real progress could be made in the practice of advertising in many other areas. More ethical behavior, more proactive self-regulation, better marketing cooperation are some with the most potential.

More ethical behavior of the advertising and the consumers could enhance the quality of advertising and reduce the proportions of manipulation through advertising.

More proactive self-regulation of the advertising. The advertising industry has established self-regulatory systems in nearly all major markets. The European Advertising Standards Alliance (EASA) brings together national advertising self-regulatory organizations and organizations representing the advertising industry in Europe who support self-regulation. It is the single authoritative voice on European advertising self-regulation. The International Chamber of Commerce has prepared a Framework for Responsible Food and Beverage Marketing Communication in 2006 with specific provisions relating to the advertising of food and beverage vis-a-vis children (www.responsible-advertising.org/eself-regulation.asp).

The history of self-regulations shows that active self-regulation has more advantages, one of them consisting in the protection of consumers from ads that mislead (Peeler, 2013). By acting quickly and decisively against misleading advertising claims, the self-regulation significantly reduces the number of potentially misleading claims. The chances of better counteracting the manipulation practices in advertising will rise in the future if the self-regulation has a more proactive role.

Better marketing cooperation between the companies and the consumers. The issue of cooperation is a distinctive feature of the relationship marketing which focus on the cultivation of mutually advantageous relationships between the company and its customers (Danciu, 2009). An enhanced cooperation in

advertising between the two subjects becomes possible when the company, the marketer includes the consumers in its marketing solutions. The consumers should become partners of the marketers, in order to contribute to the creation of value for them and to make a non-manipulative persuasive advertising.

4. Conclusions

The manipulation in marketing has become an issue which accompanies the daily life of the consumers. The companies decide to manipulate the consumers every time when the interests of the consumers don't align to their interests and goals and they don't succeed to persuade them otherwise. A great role in the consumers' manipulation has the manipulation by advertising due to its functions and place in the mix of marketing techniques used to fulfill what the consumerism demands: more consumption, more diversity and better consumption. The techniques for manipulation through advertising are controversial every time the advertiser win and the consumer lose. The critics of manipulative advertising highlight two broad classes of advertising controversies. One type of critique *charges that moral rules against causing harm are violated when manipulating through advertising*. In other words, the advertising has negative financial and health-related effects, negative impact on efficiency, harmfully effects on familial and community ties. Additionally, the advertising promotes self-centered hedonism and lastly it may have negative environmental impact. Another category of controversies about advertising *are liberty-based critics*. These arguments charge that certain forms of advertising rob a person of the capacity for free choice in deciding when to purchase a product, good or service.

No matter the arguments against advertising as a whole, the assumptions of it being always manipulative is not true. People are complex buyers which make decisions based on a variable mix of rational and emotional components. But just this complex, controversial and mixed nature of individual personality make possible to deceive, mislead and misjudge some situations, products, brands or companies as a result of manipulative advertising. The deceptive advertising is most universally thought of to be immoral. The responsibility of the consumer is greatly diminished when one discovers that they are telling lies to buy by the seller or the advertiser. In such cases of fraud, the advertisers certainly hold a majority of the responsibility. When using faulty arguments it is much more difficult to assign blame to the advertisers. Mature consumers are expected to realize which argument is real and which is bad and, if advertisers use fallacies, one would expect that the consumers know better. In such cases, the burden of

responsibility appears to fall primarily upon the consumer. More ambiguity exists in the case of emotive persuasion because the main problem consists in the difficulty of gauging how much effect advertisements have on the consumers' emotions. That's why the techniques and mechanisms of advertising should be used in a way that aligns to the convergence of interests and arguments.

Many of the manipulative actions in advertising are difficult to prove and no one can say if harder regulations will reduce the natural tendencies toward manipulation through advertising. Therefore, it seems that other solutions should be found in areas where the marketers and the consumers identify mutual interests, in order to improve the practices of advertising. Some important areas in which the advertisers and the consumers could find reciprocal benefits are the conscious advertising for conscious consumers, more ethical behavior, more proactive role of self-regulation and better cooperation in marketing and the good results could have a significant contribution toward the reduction of the proportions of manipulation through advertising. These efforts will help the reduction of the proportion of manipulation through advertising in these areas at least, *if the advertisers observe some necessary principles*.

The advertisers should move from a sole focus on corporate profits to a belief and practice that an organization can achieve something larger than making money.

- The advertisers should understand that more consumers, especially the conscious ones, recognize that all things are connected. Therefore, they must be in the process of becoming conscious of the impact of advertising and pursue the mutual benefits of it.
- The advertisers should be aware that the advertising must be authentic. That is all communication with the consumers should be hundred per cent honest and transparent. More than ever, an increasingly proportion of consumers are prizing the transparency, accountability and authenticity.
- The advertisers should align their messages with consumers' values in every aspect and in all components of advertising. The companies which align their values with their actions will earn enduring loyalty among the consumers.

If the companies follow these principles, they easily could translate them in honest, non-manipulative practices in advertising and so become more trusted.

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