

Chapter 3

Rhetoric of Advergames

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ABSTRACT

Advergames bring newness and engage better with customers. However, there is debate among marketers and communication experts as to how this tool could be exploited in the field of advertising and positioning of brands to the best of their advantage. The chapter thus aims to present arresting qualities of advergames under the rubric of rhetoric and claims that a deeper and meaningful understanding of multimodal rhetoric is needed to design and create these games. Further, to understand the working of these games and how they engage with the users, two advergames have been analyzed using multimodal analysis method, and a multimodal rhetorical framework (MRF) has been proposed for the perusal of marketers and communication experts to use as per their need and discretion.

INTRODUCTION

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Since ancient times, the art of rhetoric, through its means of powerful linguistic devices has enabled the young men to compose and deliver winning arguments. Times have changed now, however. Traditional media such as newspaper, brochure, pamphlets, flyers, etc are still popular, though no more absorbing and engaging as compared to visual medium. With the advent of internet and social media, customers of today have become more aware, brand conscious, ready to pay for the product, but aspire to be well informed to get services worth of the payment made. Amidst such competitive environments, gauging the attention of potential customers comes as one of the biggest challenges for the marketers. What comes as a panacea for them is better engagement through advertisements. Therefore, communication experts and marketers are ever engaged in devising innovative and creative strategies to woo potential customers and convert them into loyal consumers. The art of persuasion thus lies at the heart of marketing.

Can advergames, thus become the new tool to win the customers? The present chapter thus focuses on highlighting those aspects of advergames that present it as one of the most powerful, persuasive communication tools and media devices on the online world of today that pushes it to become a prime choice for advertisers in days to come. Integrated into the game, advergames aim to promote a brand, product or marketing message through an online video game. The popularity is expected to grow in days to come since there is increase in number of people doing online shopping and since advergames are strategic moves by the marketers that are designed with the purpose to increase the brand awareness and sales of the product, they seem to be the most prominent choice for the communication experts of today. If an ad of Bournvita can convince the children that the drink can make them win any competition, what if, they themselves engage through a game and win a competition. However, important for organisations and marketing experts is to design and innovate strong and meaningful games that can engage the customers and convert them into permanent users. Different mediums need to be used and exploited and so is the case with selling techniques.

Historical Overview

The upcoming of new Media platforms have impacted the way people receive and perceive information. Shocked, sometimes as people are, due to pervasiveness and penetration of new technologies in their lives, there is conscious and unconscious selection on their part to accept and make part of these media forms and latest technologies (Adams & Smith; 2015). Social media platforms such as blogs, facebook, Instagram to name a few and video games engage and connect with customers in a much different way as compared to the traditional media. It is the very interactivity and new methodology used to entice the customers that bring forth a kind of new

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