Blog Proposal

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SMAD 242

Introduction to Advertising and New Media

Section 0001

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Defining the Blog Topic

The blog topic will cover various controversial advertisements and their effects on viewers. The blog will explore the ethical and unethical aspects of the ad and viewers' reactions. It will include whether the client embraces a cultural stigma and or personal bias that purposely is being represented within the advertisement they approved. The blog will discuss how far an advertisement is willing to go in order to support a brand as well as starting a societal movement or social conversation.

Target Audience

The target audience is male and female technology users from age 24-44 (U.S. Census, 2019) who enjoy clever and controversial advertisements. The target audience is solely based within the United States in urban and suburban areas. They use current technology such as the iPhone and have personal computers, but mainly gravitate towards mobile devices. Millennials influence older generations such as people within Gen X to use modern technology (Vogels, 2019). Seven in ten Americans use social media with their main source of media consumption being Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube (Pew Research, 2019). They are attracted to popular trending music they find on the radio as well as streaming services such as Spotify. They are active but enjoy binge-watching entertainment such as sports and television shows. They normally eat out during the week but occasionally cook their own meals at home.

This audience is centralized around innovators and experiencers of the US VALS survey system. They mostly follow popular social trends and have the capability of igniting their own social movements. This select group has heightened visual stimulation and are attracted to new

interesting trends. The group also has skepticism towards advertisements and are receptive to new ideas (VALS, 2020).

How Unique is the Blog?

While doing research on blogs that are already established with the topic of controversial advertisements, it is evident that there are not many blogs that are solely for this specific topic. That is part of what would make this blog unique because not many people bring a detailed analysis to the controversial topic of ads. The current blog being created will have all the information that someone would need to get the inside scoop on controversial advertisements, including older and new advertisements.

https://www.wordstream.com/blog/ws/2017/06/19/most-controversial-ads

A similar blog post that is on controversial advertisements is titled *Recent History's Most Controversial Ads,* written by Gordon Donnelly. This blog post by Donnelly has an informative yet relaxed tone and writing style. The relaxed tone can be perceived as a weakness since it makes the author sound less credible. Donnelly (2019) writes about many controversial advertisements that failed and succeeded and why they turned out that way. This is an effective way to structure the blog post. Unlike other blogs, Donelly kept his opinion as objective as possible and that is something that this blog will aspire to embody- writing objectively. One brand that is talked about is the famous *Pepsi* commercial, featuring Kendall Jenner, which purposely symbolizes protests of the Black Lives Matter Movement (Donnelly, 2019, para. 17). The writer does an exquisite job of explaining exactly why the *Pepsi* Advertisement received so much backlash. The target audience of the blog post is stated at the beginning of the post. Donnelly (2019) writes, "No matter the medium, these are the questions (the first two, to be sure)

we marketers must ask ourselves before embarking" (para. 2). This is evidence to assume that Donnelly is writing to inform other marketers about taking precautions before promoting dangerous messages that can come from creating a controversial advertisement. Although Donnelly analyzes the content thoroughly, the design of the blog is dull. The various still photos of the advertisements being discussed are not very engaging or exciting. There is not much to it and there are also many advertisements in between the content, which can be annoying for the reader to read around.

https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/controversial-advertising-examples

Another similar blog post that also talks about controversial advertisements is written by Clifford Chi and is titled, *Should Your Brand Use Controversial Advertising? 5 Examples to Help You Decide*. Surprisingly, this blog is set up similar to the blog that was previously talked about. Both blogs share two of the same controversial advertisements. While looking at the blogs, it is interesting that many of them share the same advertisements. The most examined advertisement is the *Pepsi* Kendall Jenner commercial and the *Nationwide* dead boy commercial. Compared to Donnelly, Chi uses more sophisticated language in his blog post. His post is informative and straight to the point and is intended for a more formal, traditional audience. That is a strength because this shows the reader that the blog author is credible. One particular part of the blog that was interesting for Chi to include was the *Saturday Night Live* skit that was poking fun of companies and how they decide to make their commercials controversial (Chi, 2019, para. 7). *Saturday Night Live* is highlighting just how comical and far-out that some commercials can be, which scares some marketers to stray away from controversial advertisements for fear that it will bring bad press. The target audience of the post is marketers and advertisers looking to

integrate a controversial message into their campaign. Chi gives many examples of successful and unsuccessful advertisements along with reasons why they were perceived that way. The design of the blog is simple but effective. There is nothing that distracts the reader while reading it. It is also helpful that there are YouTube links that the reader can click on to see the advertisement that Chi is talking about. Although there are YouTube links within the blog post, most of them do not work when clicked on, which is a clear weakness of the blog.

It is important to do research on similar blogs to see what works and what does not work. This will ensure that the blog that is being created will not include features that do not work for other established blogs. It is also nice to see features that were thought of while brainstorming that work for other blogs. An example of this is embedding *YouTube* videos of the commercials that are talked about in the post so readers can view it easily. Researching other blog posts about controversial advertisements will help to make sure that this new blog can be created with the utmost efficiency

<u>Blog Content</u>

The blog post topics are separated into two categories- ethical and unethical advertising. The blog posts will have an analytical and critical combination writing style. The types of posts will include information about who approved the ad and if the advertiser(s) felt prideful or embarrassed once receiving critique from the public. Also, most posts will include analyzing if the controversial ad led to public praise or public backlash, which may have affected the sales and image of the brand. The content within each category will include the brand strategizing research, the aftermath once the ad went public, and if these ads were successes or failures.

The blog will include media elements of videos, photos, and a slide show in order to reflect off the collected blog research. Users will understand posts by being able to view the ad themselves. The content planned for the blog includes the commercials and print ads being critically analyzed. The viewers have a chance to understand the ad or commercial themselves before reading.

Rationale Behind the Design Choice

The blog's opening page is the blog feed. This was done in order to immediately grasp the user into the site by minimizing the number of clicks to reach the blog feed. When a user does find themselves on the site, they are greeted by a simple heading with the name of the blog and the title of the page. Underneath the header is a slideshow that will showcase photos of the advertisements the blog will be discussing. Each of the 8 blog posts will be easily accessible and show chronologically from top to bottom. The site will be easy to navigate and very user-friendly.

There are two main navigation tools on the site. The first is the hamburger menu in the top right corner of the heading that lists all of the blog's pages that viewers can easily access. In the footer of the blog feed page, there is a secondary navigation menu, or archive, which sorts the posts by month. Viewers can follow the blog by either clicking the email sign-up or the general follow blog button both present found next to the archive. Finally, the sleek black and white theme was chosen since it keeps the focus on the images and text in the blog. This avoids overwhelming the users with colors and allows them to focus on the content of the advertisement.

Naming the Blog

      The blog is named *The Good, the Ad and the Ugly* which is a play on words with an old popular film. *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* is a film from 1966 that is well-known with the target audience who will read this blog. This name developed after looking at different word combinations and puns that would work with the topic of controversial ads. Although the name may seem lengthy, the wordplay makes it easy to remember and will stick with the viewer. Since the blog is about controversial ads, it will be looking at not only bad examples but good ones as well, so the name encompasses both the subtopics.

Group Member Deadlines for Blog Posts

03/18 - Tanya

03/25 - Kyle

04/01 - Devon and Ian

04/08 - Ashley

References

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