

EMOTIONAL APPEALS IN ADVERTISING BANKING SERVICES

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EMOTIONAL APPEALS IN ADVERTISING BANKING SERVICES

BY

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Though an advertisement is often viewed as a means for selling – you might have a particular advertisement you like, e.g. the iconic Coca-Cola Christmas Red Truck advertisement, the Cadbury’s Gorilla advertisement or Gio Compario in the [Gocompare.com](https://www.gocompare.com) insurance advertisements on television in the UK – these advertisements are often considered unique either because of the product being advertised, the theme songs used in them, the colours applied or even the characters in the advertisements.

As individuals we have many personal reasons why we may feel attached to an advertisement – perhaps your favourite celebrity is endorsing a product or it reminds you of an endearing childhood memory. The advertisement makes you feel happy and excited, and you often smile and sing along when you hear the background music. Some advertisements can also make you angry because of what is being depicted in them, either by eliciting negative memories or through the specific wording they employ.

These advertisements appeal to our emotions; they are stimuli we react to, either positively or negatively. These

reactions are unique to individuals, which is often why, as individuals, we may enjoy a specific advertisement that a friend dislikes, with some even going a step further to report it to the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA).

The book considers emotional appeals as a creative and conscious decision made by advertising professionals to develop their advertising campaigns in a manner that appeals to consumers. Many different thought processes are engaged with before its production. One example is the image of the Andrex puppy, the Labrador Retriever, used for advertising Andrex tissue paper. The choice of image, music and actors used in advertisements are creative decisions that anticipate arousing specific feelings. The viewer will either like it and experience a willingness to try the product, or it might make them experience guilt, and encourage them to change their behaviour.

These emotional appeals are channelled through various media – TV, radio, billboards – and creative elements such as images, background music and text. Emotional appeals on radio will be different from those on TV, as images cannot be used on radio, but background music can be used in both.

Often, the discussion around emotional appeals in advertisements focuses on positive (humour, empathy) or negative (shame, guilt) emotions. This book focuses on how UK banking services are being advertised through the use of emotional appeals.

The unprecedented turbulence and uncertainty experienced in global economic and financial markets because of the credit crisis has had a damaging impact on consumer confidence. Trust and credibility have been eroded, as many customers feel let down by banks. It has been observed that banks are using emotionally appealing advertisements to reach out to customers, which presents some justification for

researching this topic, in a bid to provide theoretical and managerial knowledge to understand this concept better.

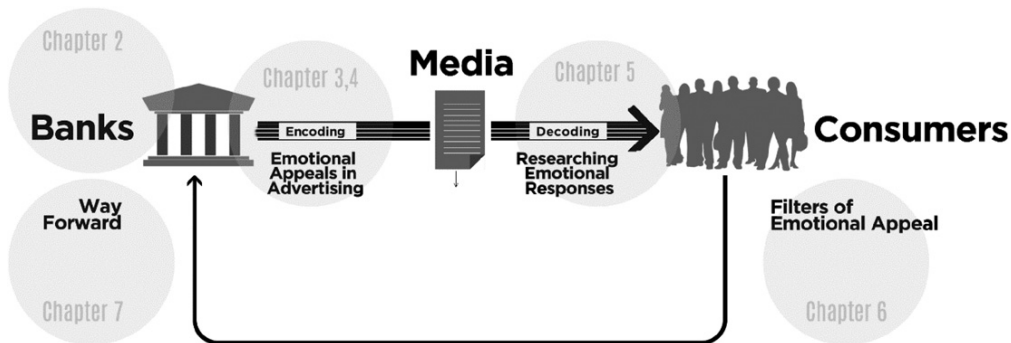
This book provides in-depth insight into how the UK financial services sector employs emotional appeals to advertise banking services and how consumers engage with these advertisements. The book is research-based, with empirical data gathered through qualitative interviews with a range of individuals as a means for better understanding attitudes towards advertising.

The book contributes to a better understanding of the congruency between emotional appeals and financial services, thereby illuminating how advertising shapes our buying decisions. Additionally, more critical issues which relate to how consumers decide where to bank are addressed, and it is found that these are not necessarily based on emotional responses. For students and researchers, the text contributes to an on-going trend in research for understanding consumer attitudes towards banking brands and the advertising strategies they employ to rebuild trust and reputation.

A general overview of the book is illustrated in [Figure 1.1](#), using the communication model. Chapter 2 identifies UK banks as senders of marketing messages; the chapter further sheds light on why they may consider sending marketing communications messages, as well as the type of messages they send.

This is followed by presenting the creative decisions that are embedded in advertisements using emotional appeals, in anticipation that it will attract consumers. Chapter 3 provides an overview of advertising appeals, both rational and emotional, and further explores the different types of emotional appeals. The unique nature of the conduits (images, music, colour) used to transfer these emotional appeals through a range of various media (traditional, e.g. TV, radio, newspaper; new, e.g. social media) is discussed in this chapter.

Figure 1.1. Chapter Overview of the Book Incorporated with the Communications Theory.



It is essential to understand that there is a difference between ‘conduit’ and ‘media channel’, despite being closely related. The image is a conduit (of emotional appeal) that can be transferred through both TV and newspapers as a type of media but not via radio; likewise, background music is a conduit that can transfer emotional appeal via radio and TV but not through a newspaper.

As Chapter 3 explores advertising appeals, Chapter 4 provides an in-depth exploration of emotional appeals in financial services advertisement, differentiating between how emotional appeals are presented across different groups of banks and various banking products and services.

Following on, Chapter 5 presents the research carried out to understand better how consumers are decoding these UK banks’ emotionally appealing advertisements, after which they can engage with the advertisements and review whether they closely match their expectations and desires from banks.

Chapter 6 presents the filtration process – how UK consumers filter the decoded meanings of advertisements to decide if they need an advertisement before making a financial decision. It is expected that consumers provide a degree of feedback following the filtration process to decide what to do about the message they received and decoded.

While emotional appeals embedded in advertisements are acknowledged, Chapter 7 considers a way forward, asking for justification for why banks need to advertise and further questions the congruence between emotional appeals and financial services advertising, at least within the UK context. This chapter completes the entire cycle of the communication model, provides closing remarks on emotional appeals in advertising financial services, and offers recommendations for how best to work with emotional appeals in financial services advertising.

A summary of the book is presented in Chapter 8, graphically illustrated in Figure 8.1, thereby achieving three outcomes that are relevant to numerous stakeholders, including financial service brands, advertising industries and academic researchers and students. First, it provides a significant theoretical contribution to the study of financial service advertisements, mainly by exploring emotions in advertisements qualitatively and also by drawing on the communication model (Kotler, 1967), Second, the filtration process of emotional appeal is introduced, which enhances an understanding of how consumers understand meanings embedded in appeals that are presented in banks' advertisements. Finally, managers will be able to appropriately consider the implications of advertisements for enhancing their brand, for building relationships with consumers and highlighting the added value of their service.