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Brand Loyalty and Consumer Involvement

BRAND LOYALTY, or the lack of brand loyalty, is an important concern for advertisers. Brand loyalty means that many people who use a product have a favourite brand, may go to a little extra trouble to find it, and might even be willing to pay more for it than other brands.

Some advertisers have developed brand loyalty for their product by spending millions and millions of dollars on advertising, which keeps the product's name in consumers' minds. Other companies have developed brand loyalty mostly through word of mouth: people tried the product or service, liked it and recommended it to their friends. Many products and services have developed brand loyalty through a combination of these processes.

Consider the following questions. Write your response in the space provided. Use another sheet of paper, if necessary.

1. List three brands of products or services that you or people you know are very loyal to.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
2. List three reasons why people might be loyal to a particular brand.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
3. One of the products or services that people feel very little brand loyalty to is their mobile phone service provider. This is why mobile phone service providers spend so much money on advertising.

Why do you think that many mobile phone users are not loyal to their mobile phone service provider?

Advertising and Pseudo-Events

THE PREFIX *PSEUDO* means “fake” (for example, you may know hip-hop artist and producer Timothy Z. Mosley by his **pseudonym**, or fake name, Timbaland). Advertisers often try to create **pseudo-events**, or fake news events, that focus on their product. A recent example was the announcement that Mortein were “killing off” their long-running mascot, Louie the Fly. The character had been used in Mortein ads since 1957, when he was created by the cartoonist Geoff Morgan and the writer Bryce Courtenay. The “death” of Louie was announced and picked up by various news organisations around Australia. No sooner had this news been absorbed than Mortein announced they were reconsidering Louie’s demise, and revealed a campaign to get the public to vote on his fate. This publicity stunt had likely been the reason the original “announcement” was made in the first place.

Another example of a pseudo-event occurred when the makers of M&M’s asked consumers to vote on what colour to change the light brown shade to – the choices were purple and blue. Blue was the winner, and the makers of M&M’s paid to have New York City’s Empire State Building lit up in blue at night to “celebrate” the winner. This pseudo-event received major coverage in the news media, including television and newspapers. Generating hype around pseudo-events is one form of stealth marketing. **Stealth marketing** occurs when an advertiser engages in marketing activities but tries to make it look as if it is not.

Consider the following questions. Write your response in the space provided. Use another sheet of paper, if necessary.

1. Find examples of a pseudo-event by paying careful attention to television programs or newspaper and magazine articles for a week or so. What examples did you find? List all the examples you found.
2. Choose one of the examples. Explain why the example you chose is a pseudo-event.
3. Review the Ad Buzz for this unit. Why do you think the media often willingly cooperate with advertisers who try to create these fake events?

Music Television and You

YOU ARE A MEMBER of the key demographic group that MTV (and other music networks such as Max) works hard to appeal to. MTV uses some of its employees to do **cool hunting**. Cool hunters go out into different communities to talk to teenagers about what trends are popular at the moment and what's not. Using this research, MTV tries to create programs that viewers will think are cool, so that more viewers will watch them. MTV shares some of the information it finds with the companies that advertise on MTV so that advertisers can make advertisements that are also considered cool.

Get a stopwatch, such as the stopwatch feature on many mobile phones. A digital kitchen timer will work, too. Watch MTV (or Max or other music television network) for an hour. Consider the following questions. Write your response in the space provided. Use another sheet of paper, if necessary.

1. Count how many advertisements you see during that hour (count music videos, if any, as advertisements for record companies). Record your answer:
2. Count how many products, if any, are identified by name during the programs, as opposed to during advertisements (this includes the name of a new album, a new video or a new movie). Record your answer:
3. How many minutes of the hour were devoted to various forms of advertising activity, including advertisements and the naming of products during the programs? Record your answer:
4. Do the maths – what percentage of the hour was devoted to various forms of advertising activity? Record your answer:

And They're Just Getting Started!

AS MENTIONED IN THE AD BUZZ, the Internet became a commercial medium around 1996. In the years since, commercial websites and online advertisers have rapidly multiplied. Go online. Do what you normally do when you surf. As you're online, count the number of advertisements you encounter. Some advertisements will appear as banners, some will appear only as links, and some may appear as "pop-ups" (these are advertisements that pop up on your screen even when you do not click on an advertising link or banner). Count every single advertisement.

Consider the following questions. Write your response in the space provided. Use another sheet of paper, if necessary.

1. How many advertisements did you count?
2. Does that number surprise you? Explain.
3. How often do you click on banners or advertisers' links? Explain.
4. Does it bother you that there is so much advertising on the Internet? Why or why not? Explain.