

## **EFFECTIVENESS OF THE ADVERTISING PROCESS**

*Capt. Dr. Ashok V. Giri*

Assistant Professor,  
MES Garware College of Commerce,  
Savitribai Phule Pune University  
Pune - 411004. (Maharashtra, India)

### **ABSTRACT**

The idea that advertising is something someone does to someone else with an identifiable effect permeates most attempts to explain the process by which advertising works. Accordingly, statements of advertising objectives generally delineate what the advertiser would like to do to the consumer. Indeed, it would seem that even though the marketing concept has won some acceptance, it has resulted neither in a parallel theory of the advertising process nor in the specification of advertising objectives mutually advantageous to advertiser and consumer. The purpose of this paper is twofold:

1. To seek a set of criteria for judging advertising effectiveness consistent with the letter and spirit of the marketing concept.
2. To develop a research paradigm for analyzing the advertising process consistent with the proposition that advertising is effective to the extent that both the advertiser and the consumer accomplish their intentions or objectives.

The marketing concept has important consequences for advertising research and for judging advertising effectiveness. An attempt is made in this article to show the possibility of several complementary conceptions of the advertising process. Since these complementary conceptions do not logically derive from each other, they do not necessarily result in mutually consistent conclusions. Consequently, a comprehensive model of the advertising process consistent with the marketing concept would appear to be both multidimensional and multivalued.

**KEYWORDS:** auxiliary concepts, advertising effectiveness, impedes progress, multidimensional, multivalued

**AUTHOR'S EMAIL ADDRESS:** [capt.drashokgiri@gmail.com](mailto:capt.drashokgiri@gmail.com)

### **INTRODUCTION**

The past decade has witnessed the development of information and communication technologies that enable easy and rapid interaction between customer and advertiser. As a result, advertisers are increasingly relying on various modes of interactive technology to advertise and promote their products and services. A new genre of advertising and marketing communications agencies has emerged, the interactive agency, even as more traditional advertising agencies have embraced interactive technologies. Expenditures for online advertising, only one form of interactive communication, doubled from 1998 to 1999 and are expected to reach \$ 21 billion by 2004. Although this will still be less than 10% of all advertising expenditures, there is reason to believe that this estimate underestimates the amount of advertising that is in reality interactive.

Although the Internet is widely heralded as a new medium for interactive communications consumers have already begun to provide evidence that they have integrated the Internet experience into their broader media use. Almost half of all personal computers are in the same room as the television set, and simultaneous viewing of television and access to the Internet are common. Such consumer directed integration of television and the Internet is but one example of interactivity involving the integration of media by consumers. Combinations of older media, such as traditional print and broadcast advertising with the telephone (especially, but not exclusively 800 telephone numbers) have long provided a degree of interactivity.

At the most general level, feedback via sales reflects interactivity. Interactivity is, therefore, a characteristic of the consumer, not a characteristic of the medium; consumers can choose to respond or not. Thus, in this sense interactivity is not really new. What is new, are the speed, scope, and scale of interactivity that is provided by

new information and communication technologies. The Internet is a new technology that makes some things simpler, cheaper and easier. It is a new way to communicate with consumers, for consumers to communicate with one another, and a new way to sell products and services to consumers, but it joins other media and distribution channels as vehicles for these tasks. It does have some features, such as hyperlinks, that are different from those found in other media, but other media also have unique characteristics. The increasing technological integration of telephones and television with the Internet also suggests that interactive media, and hence, interactive advertising, are not unique to the Internet.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

In literature and practice the evaluation of advertising effectiveness has used two basic models:

- the dichotomous model;
- the three-dimensional model.

The dichotomous model is applied mainly in product and brand advertising, tending to isolate and evaluate separately the following:

- sales effect;
- communication effect.

The sales effect refers to the assessment of the capability of advertising to affect the sales volume and/or the market share, regardless of the possible influence of other variables. For Batra et al. (1995), the effectiveness of advertising should be considered for its effect on sales in the short term. This advertising performance measurement is based on the marginal theory (Chamberlin, 1948). The advertising is therefore regarded as an independent variable that can be combined with other marketing variables to have a certain effect on the dependent variable, i.e. sales. The aim is to seek the best combination of the determinants of the sales increase.

The effect of communication refers to the ability to reach, with appropriate messages, a more significant share of public. Such effect is examined in literature with different approaches:

- sociological;
- semiotic;
- psychological;
- socio-psychological.

Sociological analysis focuses on the community, considered as a system governed by rules and social norms, and on the social behavior. The role of advertising and consumption in the society change is a very fertile topic. Sociology has examined how advertising influences opinions, attitudes and behaviors of individuals and social groups.

There are two opposite sociological perspectives to the advertising function in contemporary society. The first maintains a positive approach to advertising. It is believed that the role advertising is to better organize economic and social relations, to harmonize social behaviors, to make people adhere to common values and to help them to better live together without problems. The second approach is, by contrast, rather critic, because advertising tends to generate a mass consumption. In order to adapt messages to a wider audience, introduces new, poorly differentiated, symbolic values.

The semiotic analysis focuses in the first instance, on symbols. These are identified as anything that conveys meaning, e.g., words, gestures, images, and dance. Semiotics studies the problem of encoding, and more generally of the code used. The object of investigation is the message itself containing different signs that can be interpreted according to a pre established intention, without reference to the consumer and the influence on the consumer behavior. This approach is useful especially in the context of advertising creation. Authors assess the effectiveness of advertising in reference either to the language of the message or the graphic image of the message. However, they analyze the quality of message from the viewpoint of its construction, its presentation and the place of the communication process. The impact of the message on the recipient is a minor problem in

the process of the message evaluation. This is an important limitation to the semiotic approach in terms of marketing.

Communication in general and advertising in particular, were treated by psychologists starting from the motivations of recipients, which occupy a central position in the analysis. This is because of their influence on the perception of the recipient. They believe that the motivations drive consumer behavior. So the purpose for the advertising creator, is to identify the reasons of consumer behavior, in order to identify the most effective advertisement message or to remove the communication barriers. With the psychological approach, other types of research and investigation have emerged, thanks to the contribution of neuroscience. The evidence (obtained through scientific experimentation) has become a necessary support to verify the assumptions. The psychological approach has the advantage to measure the effectiveness of advertising with reference to the recipient of the message, particularly to the consumers' characteristics. On the other hand, the approach does not provide exhaustive answers, not delving into the exact causes that lead the recipient of the message publicity to expose themselves voluntarily to the message, decode it, to store and, eventually, to make the purchase. So it is not taken into account the entire communication process, and, in particular, the external factors, especially those related to the environment, that may play a crucial role in determining the behavior of the recipient.

The socio-psychological approach takes simultaneously into account the message and the recipient of the message. This approach aims to study the effectiveness of advertising in terms of persuasiveness, observing the effects on the formation process of attention, memory, attitude and behavior. This research methodology considers the environment of the communication process and its actual interactions. The experimentation is widely used. It also allows to consider all hypotheses tested together, and all the links that may exist between variables, through a pre-test, getting an advantage in terms of validity of the research. Rather than focusing solely and exclusively on direct effects of certain variables taken individually, that is difficult to control in reality, this approach studies the actual contribution of these variables in explaining the evolution of the dependent variable, sales.

The major criticisms to the dichotomous model concern the partial evaluation and the inability to provide reliable breakdowns of the effects achieved by advertising and by other company politics (marketing and communication). For these reasons, sometimes, the three-dimensional models (i.e. AIDA model and model Dagmar) are preferred. These models are used both in planning advertising campaigns and evaluating their effectiveness. They propose a hierarchy of communication effects, cognitive affective and behavioral. Namely the analysis of cognitive dimension concerns the messages understanding and storing and must take account of different types of memory: spontaneous recall, without any added indication; stimulated recall, facilitated by the presentation of certain evidence; related memory, when respondents are able to describe at least one specific element of the communication; recognition, or identification of the advertising; brand allocation, the memory not only of the advertising but also of the advertised brand).

The affective dimension is linked to the attitude toward and perceptions of communication. Affective reactions and emotional acceptance of that type of campaign are investigated. The affective attitude towards the images proposed and the spread opinion of consumers is detected.

The behavioral dimension describes changes in buying behavior, detectable by intentions and actions measured by sales and market share.

All the models mentioned so far are mainly focused on three elements of the communication process: the recipients (in terms of audience, memory, storage), the media used (in terms of impact, coverage, frequency, etc..) and the feedback (in terms of attitudes, behaviors, opinions, etc...). They totally omit other elements (source, code, context) assuming essentially that the communication process was conducted in optimal conditions or at least without distortion. Moreover a fundamental element for an effective communication process is the use of the same code by the source and recipient. Otherwise, the recipient will not understand the message or give a different meaning and this will lead to the phenomenon Eco called "aberrant decoding". However, since as stated the message is what we understand, not what it was intended to understand, it becomes important to examine not so much and not only what the firms wanted to communicate, but what was actually communicated.

## **THE ADVERTISING PROCESS**

There is, of course, no doubt that advertising in some sense "works" and that it makes a difference. Perhaps it is the very "self-evidence" of the "effects" of advertising which impedes progress toward a more adequate understanding of the process by which advertising works and of the nature of the effects which advertising produces. Most of the published models of the process by which advertising is thought to work are based on simple, mechanical principles. The general belief is that a sender sends a message via some medium to a receiver who, upon intercepting the message, is variously "caused," "triggered," or "stimulated" to react in accordance with the advertiser's intentions. The fact that not all consumers react in quite the same manner has been "explained" in various ways. Inattention, selective perception, misinterpretation, forgetting, or just plain fickleness are some of the concepts that have been advanced to account for differences in consumer behaviour. Actually, many modern psychologists and behavioural scientists have rejected the mechanical, or stimulus-response, model of psychological and communicative processes as conceptually and empirically inadequate. And those who have adhered to this model have had to add numerous auxiliary concepts to justify empirical phenomena not explained by the original, simple model. It can be demonstrated empirically that communication is not something someone does to someone else. Morally and operationally, the individual human is an autonomous entity who communicates from and to the world around him by attributing meaning and importance to selected data of that world. This fact of life may be overlooked, in part because it is concealed behind people's overlapping expectations, and in part because mechanical models of the advertising process have prevented researchers from "seeing" this process in other than cause and effect terms. To demonstrate the inadequacy of cause and effect models of the advertising process, it is useful to first differentiate between the data and the information people derive from these data. Second, it is useful to differentiate between the intentions that advertisers seek to embody in their ads, and the intentions consumers apply to these same ads. Third, it must be recognized that the complex array of needs, emotions, values, and knowledge underlying human choice behaviour is not transferable or communicable as such. People must actively create information and feelings by processing available physical data in the context of their own unique experiences. To put it differently, psychologically passive people cannot be persuaded to purchase particular products. Without active involvement by consumers, advertising can have no "effect" whatsoever. Thus, in view of the fact that information must necessarily be sent or received by humans as physical data, an important question facing the advertising researcher is not what advertising does to people but what people do with advertising. The purposes for which people use advertising will, in turn, be dependent upon at least two sets of conditions:

1. People's feelings, beliefs, and knowledge about the usefulness, believability, and function of advertising. Technically, these are the metacommunicative characteristics of advertising. The conditions involved here apply to all advertising and serve to define, facilitate, and constrain the kinds of information people can, will, and feel they should derive from advertising in general.
2. People's feelings, beliefs, and knowledge about the usefulness and validity of some specific advertisement. Technically, these are the communicative characteristics of advertising. The conditions involved here serve to define the amount and kinds of information particular consumers can and are willing to derive from particular ads.

The traditional models of the advertising process seldom include this distinction between the metacommunicative and the communicative characteristics of advertising. But more important, these same traditional models also tend to neglect the active and indispensable role played by consumers in bridging the gap between messages and action. The creative efforts of advertisers and advertising agencies loom so large in the general image of the advertising process that researchers often overlook the fact that the consumer must be as creative as the advertiser if he is to perceive the intended information or to feel the intended emotion.

## **OBJECTIVES OF INTERACTIVE ADVERTISING**

In general, the goals of interactive advertising tend to be similar to the traditional objectives of advertising. This means that many of the traditional measures of advertising effectiveness remain relevant, even in a world of interactive media. However, interactive advertising also has some properties that expand the range of potential objectives and that facilitate the acquisition of traditional measures of advertising effectiveness. Interactive advertising also has the potential to lessen the 'process loss' associated with uncoordinated advertising, to reduce the difficulties commonly encountered in clearly communicating an advertising message and to help overcome resistance to new products.

At the same time, interactive advertising also has the potential to increase the efficiency and quality of consumers' decisions, increase customers' involvement and satisfaction, and promote trust through reciprocity in information exchange, technical assistance, and reduction of information asymmetry. Finally, marketers can use feedback from consumers to improve their advertising message and intended target, and strategically adjust their

customer support, product line, and services provided. Interactive advertising may also produce greater efficiency, trustworthiness, and quality in advertising. Thus, interactive advertising has the potential to fundamentally change the nature of advertising in much the same way that electronic communication infrastructure has changed the nature of group interaction.

Interactive media of various types not only opens new opportunities for communication with and among consumers, it also creates opportunities for creating new measures of consumer response to such communications, as well as to product offerings and other marketing initiatives. Interactive media shift control of the information flow from the marketer to the consumer. This provides many more options for responding to information than previous forms of marketing communication, and it is the response of consumers to these options that provides the basis for new measures of consumer response. For example, providing consumers with the opportunity to search for more information about a product, as is done at many Internet sites, provides an opportunity to monitor the types of information and products that consumers seek at both an individual and aggregate level.

To illustrate the power of interactivity, consider the following scenario: a manufacturer of a product offers a description of a product concept. Information about this concept can be obtained by consumers in an interactive environment through an interactive search of various branching trees of information offering more and more detailed information about the product concept. Note that the intensity of search for information (measured by click through rate) can become a surrogate for interest in the product. Indeed, because such search involves deliberate and active decisions by the consumer, it is likely that measures of the breadth and depth of information search will be far better predictors of product interest and eventual purchase behavior than measures currently in use.

It is very likely that measures of intensity of information search bears a strong relationship to product interest and, in turn, to product purchase. Further, interactive media provide the opportunity for direct customer feedback regarding product modifications, likes and dislikes, and improvements. Evaluation of product concepts is but one potential opportunity for using the power of interactive media. By tracking the types of information users of interactive media seek it should be possible to determine the information that consumers find most useful when evaluating a product. Indeed, examination of the information search patterns of users of interactive media may inform positioning decisions. Information provided by the consumer to the marketer can provide a means for customized offers and customized advertising. Indeed, fully interactive advertising would provide the consumer with the opportunity to request information, not simply respond to what is provided by the advertiser.

While the potential of interactive media is clear, much remains to be done to realize that potential. For example, numerous measures of intensity of search for information (click-through rates) might be constructed which vary in their capacity to capture the depth and breadth of search. There is also the important issue of establishing a link between such measures and more traditional measures of purchase interest and intent. In addition, new issues arise in the context of interactive advertising that do not arise, at least to the same extent, in the context of traditional advertising.

For example, there is the question of whether and when consumers wish to be engaged by an interactive medium. There is also the question of how much information consumers are prepared to provide advertisers or even how much information consumers are prepared to allow marketers to capture about the interaction. Finally, there are issues of satiation of response that arise in the context of measures based on interactive media that do not arise with more traditional measures. Consumers have only limited time and resources, and therefore, are unlikely to be able to sustain large numbers of on-going interactive relationships.

## **NEW THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR ADVERTISING EFFECTIVENESS**

Most scholars generally concede that the effects of advanced technologies are less a function of the technologies themselves, and more a function of how these technologies are adapted by people. Thus, the effects and effectiveness of interactive advertising may differ from anticipated outcomes as consumers and marketers respond and adapt to changes in their own environments. This suggests that research on interactive advertising should focus on the dynamic processes by which consumers and marketers incorporate advanced technologies into their reciprocal communications. DeSanctis and Poole (1994) have proposed adaptive structuration theory, an extension of structuration theory, to explain the interplay between the structures of technology, relevant actors, and changes in technology and behavior that arise from such interplay.

For example, Poole and DeSanctis (1989) used structurational concepts to examine how groups appropriated the interaction rules of their decision support systems, thereby structuring their group communications and reinforcing or modifying their systems' influence over time. Such an adaptive model may also be an appropriate conceptual framework for examining the effects and effectiveness of interactive advertising. Ongoing interaction between consumers and marketers may be conceived of as a special case of structuration.

Structuration involves the production, reproduction, and transformation of social institutions, which are enacted through the interaction between individuals and institutions.

Application of structuration theory to interactive advertising would involve the identification of the ways in which consumers shape the production, reproduction, and transformation of the advertising message, future products and services and relationships with marketers and other consumers. This interaction can, in turn, shape the actions taken by advertisers. Structural concepts can be used to examine how marketers and consumers appropriate interaction rules to influence the effectiveness of advertising and other jointly beneficial outcomes. Following structural terminology interactive advertising may be regarded as a social institution that is produced, reproduced, and modified when consumers engage in interactive communication. As a social institution, advertising both shapes and is shaped by consumer preferences.

## **MEASURING ADVERTISING EFFECTIVENESS**

One important reason for the reliance on mechanical models of the advertising process appears to arise from the need and predilection of advertisers to measure the effects of advertising. Indeed, the argument for some measure of the relationship between advertising effort and purchasing behaviour has such an extremely strong intuitive appeal that its attainment often seems worth the cost of a few simplifying assumptions. It should be noted that sales is not the only criterion used in measuring the effects of advertising. Some researchers have sought to establish communications or non-purchase measures of advertising effects. Changes in consumers' product awareness, attitudes, preferences, and loyalties are examples of such communications effects of advertising. The differences between sales and communications measures of advertising effects have been elaborately discussed by several researchers. The differences are largely a question of technical accuracy, in as much as the reasoning underlying applications of sales and communications criteria are quite similar. The issue of concern here is conceptual adequacy rather than technical accuracy. For example, sales and communications measures of advertising effectiveness both take into account only selected residuals of the advertising process, but neither measures the effectiveness of the process itself. Quite contrary to the spirit of the marketing concept, advertising effectiveness is still measured only in terms of the advertiser's costs and benefits. That is, existing means of measuring advertising effectiveness serve the purposes of the advertiser interested in "selling what he makes." These same means, however, do not and cannot possibly serve the purposes of the advertiser interested in "delivering a standard of living. In view of the role necessarily played by consumers in the advertising process, there is no way, on the basis of the traditional theories of the advertising process, to decide just who or what it is that is effective. Is it the consumer who is an effective receiver, or is it the ad or the medium which delivers an effective message, or is it the copywriter who is an effective sender? Traditional models do not attempt to answer these questions. And, from a policy point of view, intelligent answers to these questions seem both necessary and crucial.

In sum, advertising is here viewed as effective only to the extent that it is mutually advantageous to advertisers and consumers. Indeed, effectiveness does not seem a meaningful concept apart from some understanding of the purposes or objectives of both consumers and advertisers. Or, to put it differently, a measure of the effectiveness of the advertising process should include some assessment of the costs and benefits from the point of view of both consumers and advertisers.

**Levels of Analysis and Description** The particular statements made concerning communication systems and the particular standards adopted for the purpose of assessing advertising, media, and messages will depend upon the assumptions and the conceptual constructs underlying the analysis. Five different ways of analyzing and describing the advertising process (and, with appropriate modifications, any communication process) are suggested here

1. One can think about communication systems in terms of physical data dissemination and in terms of dissemination techniques and media. The reduction of advertising phenomena to physical messages and movements of messages allows the application of many well developed and time tested physical science models and measurement techniques. Also, it enables the use of terminology familiar from everyday encounters with the physical world. The mechanistic model of consumer behavior necessarily involved is based on the assumption that words, pictures and media comprise the essence of communication.
2. One can think about communication systems in cognitive or psychological terms. Given this approach one becomes involved in such concepts and terms as perception, conception, information processing, thinking and the like. This approach quite clearly goes beyond the realm of physical phenomena and measurement is extremely difficult. The basic assumption here is that communication is a uniquely individual and human phenomenon.
3. One can think about communication systems in functional terms. Here one leaves the world of psychological phenomena as such and enters a world of utility, usefulness, operational requirements,

instrumental purposes, and economic values. In other words, the concern here is with the functions (informative, persuasive, confirmative) that advertising performs in the consumer's communication system. The basic assumption is that human communication is purposeful and intentional in nature.

4. One can think about communication systems in structural terms. That is to say, one can think in terms that enable one to view advertising (either a total campaign or a single ad) as one element of either a producer's or a consumer's communication system. One possible research topic here would pertain to the relative prominence of advertising as a source of information for consumers. The basic assumption here is that an individual's communication system has significant enduring or stable characteristics or that an individual's data acquisition indeed is "systematic" to a significant degree.
5. Finally, one can think about communication systems from a moral or ethical point of view. The current interest in truth in advertising, for example, appears to be part of an attempt to develop a philosophy of advertising. Unfortunately, the controversy surrounding advertising as a means of facilitating the performance of a free market economy is fraught with pseudo issues and emotional outbursts which bear little resemblance to a well considered philosophy. Intelligent discussion of these issues is not, of course, facilitated by the fact that advertising researchers themselves are using inadequate models of the advertising process.

These five ways of thinking about communication and, more specifically, about advertising, comprise logically complementary approaches to researching and to creatively intervening in the communication systems of consumers. The key features of this paradigm are:

1. Each of the five different elements of an individual's communication system can be studied from five different and complementary points of view.
2. Since each of the five approaches to the analysis and description of the advertising process implies a conceptualization of that process different from that of the others, five different yet complementary criteria for the assessment of advertising effectiveness logically emerge.

The conceptual categorizations emerging from the paradigm outlined invite a far more detailed description of the advertising process than space permits here. With these conceptual categories potentially ranging from the physical characteristics of awareness (biological and neurological enablers and constraints) to the moral characteristics of commitment (moral attitudes toward advertising constituting an integral part of the individual's identity), some have clearly greater intuitive appeal than others.

But even in a more general sense there are many interesting consequences of the fact that several logically complementary ways of thinking exist regarding advertising and communication systems. Thus, advertising can be effective in psychological terms, and quite ineffective in functional terms and vice versa. That is, an ad (or campaign) can evoke communication which leads to behavior not associated with purchasing (or even to behavior oriented toward avoiding purchase) of the advertised product. This is not a very surprising conclusion. But note also that advertising can be useful even if consumers do not derive the information intended by the advertiser. To put it differently, advertising can be useless even if it is "truthful" and "false" even if it is useful. But what does all this do to the idea of advertising "effectiveness" ? It is, of course, possible to avoid this issue merely by maintaining that effective advertising is advertising that sells. But since sales are after the fact events, a resolution of the issue raised above still seems necessary. At the present time it seems possible to do little more than repeat the criteria outlined above and suggest some of the implications for the creation and measurement of advertising effectiveness. In light of a consumer centered concept of the advertising process, the most effective advertising campaign would seem to be that which:

1. Provides the most efficient means of physically disseminating and receiving the data required;
2. Provides the best possible means for the advertiser to say what he wants to say, and for the consumer to "receive" what he can, will, and should receive (psychological characteristics) ;
3. Provides the functionally most suitable and relevant guidance for exchange and consumption behavior;
4. Provides the best structural match or fit with other elements in both the advertiser's and the consumer's communication systems;
5. Is strategically, ethically, and legally as sound as possible.

Taken together, these five statements comprise a broad definition of the term "advertising effectiveness." Each statement implies a criterion which frequently conflicts with the criteria implied by one or more of the other statements. Resolution of these conflicts could be an important task for future research of the advertising process. Though criteria such as these increase immensely the complexity of the measurement issue, they also open up some possibilities for innovations which perhaps have not hitherto been obvious.

## **INTERACTIVE ADVERTISING DOES NOT WORK ALONE**

Advertising is only a part of a total marketing effort. A product that is poorly positioned, overpriced, inadequately distributed, badly packaged, or inferior to competition may suffer sales declines even though the advertising itself is well-conceived and professionally executed. The specific contribution of advertising to sales has always been difficult to ascertain. Interactive advertising may well make the determination of precisely what marketing actions produced a particular outcome even more difficult to do. The influence of any particular advertising message may be less important than the cumulative reciprocal communication between advertiser and consumer. Recently, several scholars have argued that the increasing availability of information, and the sophistication of the technology for obtaining, processing and analyzing this information, are blurring the boundaries of the several elements of the marketing mix.

There have also been calls for changes in the organization of both the marketing function and the firm itself to accommodate this blurring of traditional functional lines within marketing and between marketing and other functional disciplines within and external to the firm. This blurring of boundaries has been partially recognized by calls for "integrated communications," but the blurring extends beyond communication activities. Distribution and communication are becoming inextricably linked, and decisions about the one are increasingly difficult to make in isolation from the other. Indeed, it may be difficult to differentiate some marketing activities as clearly serving an advertising or distribution function. Similarly, where interactive advertising is used to better design products, it will be impossible to separate the effects of communication from product design.

Models of consumer response that focus only on the effects of advertising, or that attempt to separate advertising effects from other effects of the marketing mix are likely to be less than helpful or even misleading. Rather than measure the effectiveness of interactive advertising, it may be more useful to measure the effects of integrated marketing programs. Similarly, other consumers and other sources of information may play a role as great or greater than interactive advertising. Discovering consumers' use of these sources and how they integrate such information into decision making will be a challenging research question.

## **SOME IMPLICATIONS**

Let it be emphasized that the exchanges of products and services are being accepted as the ultimate end and *raison d'être* of advertising. But the data one would use in assessing the effectiveness with which this key function of advertising is accomplished depend in large measure upon how one thinks about (conceptualizes) the advertising process. And, though sales are the key aim of advertising, it would seem that, by thinking of advertising as the cause of sales, millions of dollars have been wasted either on attempting to "make" people do what they intended to do anyway or on attempting to "make" people do what they had no intentions of doing whatever the incentive. Equally important is the fact that advertising appears to be used by consumers for purposes which have little or nothing to do with the purchase of goods and services.' Though little is known in a scientific sense about the manner in which people use advertising, it would seem that the mere presence of countless advertising messages necessarily modifies either favorably or unfavorably the individual consumer's environment in quite a significant way. If the advertising process were thought of not as something someone does to someone else but as a phenomenon of human communication designed, managed, and operated for the mutual advantage of buyers and sellers, perhaps more efforts would be devoted to:

1. Upgrading and protecting the legitimacy and therefore the usefulness of advertising as an information source.
2. Designing advertising programs as if they were information systems aimed at enabling the consumer to rely on them as sources of necessary, useful, and inspiring information when and where such information serves his purposes.
3. Measuring the effectiveness of advertising as one would measure the effectiveness of an information system. That is to say, seeking to measure effectiveness not only by the number of decisions made by all consumers, but also by the contributions of advertising to the soundness of these decisions.
4. Creating or modifying media and data displays (ads) to improve qualitatively and quantitatively upon communicative possibilities (in contrast with present attempts to improve upon communicative probabilities) at the consumer advertisement interface. That is, to aim for a richer communication experience rather than a more determinate one.

These are just a few implications of thinking about advertising from the point of view of the mutual interests of consumers and advertisers. The main point is that if advertisers chose to think of themselves and their customers

as members of the same organization as individuals with a common goal then the "problem" of advertising effectiveness would look different. Just as the test of an in company information system involves some conception of the needs and requirements of the user, so the test of advertising should involve some measure of how well it enables both the advertiser and the consumer to get where they both want to go.

## **CONCLUSION**

It must be emphasized that the thoughts outlined in this article hold no promise of solving or even simplifying the existing problems of advertising and advertising research. Rather, the aim is to point out that most of these existing problems are born of the way advertisers have chosen to think about advertising. To change one's mode of thinking about advertising will not eliminate problems of advertising and advertising research. But it may change them. Advertisers and advertising have been severely criticized in recent years. But whether or not the criticisms are reasonable, advertisers have thought about advertising in a way which renders them incapable of taking into account, let alone seriously dispute, the critics' allegations. On the one hand, the critic assumes that advertising is effective and concerns himself with the nature of these effects. On the other hand, the advertiser has yet to decide whether advertising is effective and, if so, how and in what way it is effective. Furthermore, those who create advertising need qualitative data. They need data which will aid them in deciding what to say in their advertisements. But the traditional way of thinking about advertising effectiveness calls primarily for quantitative data. Even if it is known that a particular campaign was effective, decision makers and creative people are often left to rely on their hunches concerning why it was effective. These are some of the reasons for advocating a different way of thinking about the advertising process and a different direction in advertising research. Whether the consequences of this particular way of thinking are to be preferred over those emerging from traditional models has yet to be established. But then, one does not legislate ways of thinking, one proposes them.

## **REFERENCES**

1. Arun Chaudhuri, *Indian Advertising: 1780 to 1950 A.D.*, 2006, West Patel Nagar, New Delhi
2. S N Murthy, *Advertising*, 2007, New Delhi.
3. C.L. Tyagi, Arun Kumar, *Advertising Management*, 2004, New Delhi.
4. Bent Stidsen, 1970, 'Some Thoughts on the Advertising Process', *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 34, No. 1 (Jan., 1970), pp. 47-53.
5. John Wilmschurst, Adrian Mackay, *Fundamentals of Advertising*, 2010, New York.
6. Arch G. Woodside, *Measuring the Advertising Effectiveness*, 1996, USA.