

Female stereotype in ads can lose sales

United Press International
SAN FRANCISCO — Women may have come a long way, but the advertisements portraying them remain in the "high-button shoe and horse-and-buggy era," says a leading researcher who warns marketers outmoded stereotypes can cost them sales.

Advertisers' persistence in maintaining an image that fits only 13 percent of today's American households repels some consumers and leaves a huge untapped market, Rena Bartos said.

"I can't give you specific figures, but I can say the lag

between image and reality in the portrayal of women in print ads and broadcast commercials is costing marketers," said the senior vice president and director of communications development for the J. Walter Thompson USA advertising agency.

Bartos since 1966 has had the unique job of tracking social trends and identifying marketing opportunities that result from social change.

"Demographics lodged in the computer data bank — not to mention the evidence of our daily experiences — keep telling us that lifestyles are changing, spending patterns

are changing, and women are wonderfully diverse," she said.

In her latest book, "Moving Target: What every marketer should know about women," Bartos shares her findings and suggests the industry would be "better off aiming at where women are going rather than where they've been."

In screening 125 commercials, she said, she found only nine that recognized contemporary women, "and they were the blandest in the world."

"There's still a strong industry prejudice that to irri-

rate is to get attention," she said. "And there's a strong industry prejudice that what worked in the past should work now," she said.

"The fact is, only 13 percent of all American households are like the ones portrayed in the ads."

Advertising is beamed at four groups: "Housewife, 18 to 49 — key customer for household products and foods; male head of household, 24 to 49 — key customer for big-ticket items like cars and travel; girl, 18 to 25 — key customer for cosmetics, perfume, fashion; man, 18 to 34 — key customer for sports

cars, beer, liquor, toiletries."

Most marketers take as a given that most women are fulltime housewives with children; most women who work are unmarried; no married woman would work if she could afford to stay at home and working women and housewives want the same things from products and respond to the same strategies.

None of those assumptions is true, Bartos said, noting that 56 percent of American women work, with another 16 percent planning to.

In her research, Bartos defined four distinct groups of

female consumers: career woman; just-a-job working woman; plan-to-work housewife and stay-at-home housewife.

The career woman is least likely to watch evening television but most likely to listen to the radio and read magazines and newspapers, followed by the plan-to-work housewife, she said.

In buying, the career women are most likely to plan ahead, be cautious and brand loyal, the just-a-job worker tends to be experimental, and the stay-at-home housewife is the most persuadable and eco-

nomy-minded.

While marketers assume the stay-at-home housewife is most concerned with cleaning, polishing and grooming her home, data show the career woman and plan-to-work housewife spend more frequently.

Bartos recommends marketers re-examine the assumed target, evaluate the market potential of new target groups, develop a fresh perspective, explore the attitudes and needs of the new group and redefine marketing targets.

Music industry leaping aboard video bandwagon

United Press International
While music company executives dance in their suites to the sound of a rebounding record industry, the real celebration may be just around the corner.

The rock revolution of the 1980s — video music — has found a home in at least 17 million American homes and mushroomed into a multimillion-dollar business.

Conglomerates like American Express and Sony Corp. are riding shotgun over the latest undulation in the electronics craze. Kids are "videoing" the

latest songs. So are yuppies — young, urban preppies with college degrees and \$30,000 salaries.

Ed Sullivan and Dick Clark introduced American teenagers to music with pictures, but the video music explosion was ignited on Aug. 1, 1981, when New York-based Music Television aired its first clip, "Video Killed the Radio Star." The cable station now programs rock 'n' roll video clips 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to an estimated 14.5 million Americans.

"We believe video music is the

future of the music business," said Les Garland, vice president of programming at MTV. "It's a new art form."

"Thirty-seven percent of the homes in America are wired for cable. We'd sure like to be in every one of them."

So would Warner Communications and American Express, who formed a partnership to bankroll MTV, called the fastest growing cable station in history. Sony Corp. is testmarketing a video version of the 45-rpm record, priced at about \$20.

Record companies are

approving budgets ranging from \$20,000 to \$200,000 for videos because, in essence, they are three-minute commercials for the artists.

Mark Goodman, one of five video jockeys at MTV, said "look" has always been a big part of a group's success. Remember Elvis?

"The first thing you remember about him was the way he bumped around with those hips. The Beatles were a huge packaged product. People dug the way they looked, the hairstyle," Goodman said.

"Let's face it — a band that has a good looking front man or beautiful front lady, that's a help."

Video must deal with problems radio never had — like nudity, transvestites and violence.

MTV rejected a Van Halen video clip of "Pretty Woman" because it used midgets and transvestites. Duran Duran's "Girls on Film" was banned for nudity. And a Rolling Stones song, "Neighbors," was nixed after a brief run because viewers complained about violence in

the video clip.

"We have to be careful of community standards," Garland said. "What might be acceptable in New York might not be acceptable in Paducah, Ky."

While some artists search for the censorship boundaries, others are busy turning MTV into a video art gallery.

Stevie Nicks of Fleetwood Mac recreated a vintage 1930s street scene in her elaborate video, "Gypsy," while Michael Jackson hired members of Los Angeles street gangs and dozens of professional dancers for his

\$150,000 video, "Beat It." The album has now gone "platinum," with worldwide sales of about 10 million copies.

Videos are selling record and products. MTV's last advertisers has grown from a dozen in 1981 to 160 in 1982, growth that has caught the eye of network programmers.

On July 29, NBC became the first commercial network to enter the video music field with a 90-minute "Friday Night Video," produced by the same guy who came up with Saturday Night Live.

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Students' intake of sodium high

United Press International
CHICAGO — College students snacking on pretzels, popcorn and potato chips are consuming "alarmingly" high amounts of sodium without even picking up a salt shaker, a researcher says.

Mahmood A. Kahn, a registered dietician and University of Illinois-Champaign professor, said a study of 139 students showed they are either exceeding the amount of sodium they should consume — or hovering around the maximum recommended daily intake.

Because excessive sodium is associated with high blood pressure, students should work on preventive measures to avoid the risk of hypertension — especially if there is a history of high blood pressure in a student's family, Kahn warned.

"College students are an important segment of the population," he said in a report in the Journal of the American Dietetic Association. "Poor food habits during this stage of their lives can result in serious consequences."

"The nutritive quality of foods consumed by college students needs careful assessment."

The students in Kahn's survey completed a 15-page questionnaire detailing the food they eat in an average 24-hour period.

More than 3,000 milligrams of sodium consumed daily is considered unsafe.

Some male students indulged in more than four times the daily recommendation, taking in 13,956 milligrams a day, the study showed. Female students consumed up to 9,374 milli-

grams daily.

Averages for the study were 3,904 milligrams for men and 2,628 for women.

However, those tallies were computed solely on the amount of sodium found in the food they ate and do not include salt from a shaker, a factor that probably escalates the average sodium intake beyond excessively high amounts, Kahn said.

"The total sodium intake of men was found to be significantly higher than that for women," he said. "The difference may be attributed to the men's consumption of greater quantities of food and, therefore, greater caloric intake."

Snacks such as pretzels, popcorn and potato chips contributed to much of the sodium take, as did the highly salty foods consumed at lunch and dinner.

"The majority of students used carbonated beverages, lowered by salted snack items, alcoholic beverages, and candy and gums. Alcoholic beverages were consumed mostly by men," Kahn said.

"For morning snacks — between breakfast and lunch — students most often used dieties and gums. For afternoon snacks — between lunch and supper — most students consumed carbonated beverages. The second choice was foods like the candies and gums category."

"Most of the students ate salted snack items for evening snacks — between supper and breakfast. Salted snack foods included such items as pretzels, popcorn and chips, obvious sources of sodium," he said.

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