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**“The Man Your Man Could Smell Like”**

“Old Spice for Men debuted in 1938, and by the end of the 1970s it was the iconic scent of manly sex appeal: the whistling-sailor aftershave in the scrimshaw-looking bottle. But by 1990, when it was bought by Procter & Gamble, Old Spice had gotten a bit musty. The brand image had become less sexy and more "that stuff that smells like Grandpa”” (Stevenson). Since the 1990’s Old Spice deodorant, antiperspirant, and body wash has had a major turnaround. Switching gears, Old Spice’s campaigns sought to target a younger audience, generally males twelve to thirty four years old. Today, Old Spice battles Axe for the number one spot for male grooming product. Advertising today is so important in selling products. Through the use of many rhetorical techniques, “The Man Your Man Could Smell Like,” ad by Old Spice creates a clever and over the top campaign to promote Old Spice body wash to consumers.

The ad features a quick monologue of the “Old Spice guy” stating how “anything is possible when you smell like Old Spice.” The ad starts with the Old Spice guy standing in the bathroom with the shower running in the background talking to the audience. The ad then, transitions to him on sailboat and then to him riding on a horse. The ad is intense and humorous which grabs the audience’s attention. The Old Spice guy establishes credibility as he is a good looking, flawless figure who appears manly; exactly what the ad is shooting for, insinuating you can be like him.

From the very beginning and throughout the commercial the Old Spice guy downplays on the audience. “Look at your man, now back to me, now back at your man, now back to me. Sadly he isn’t me” (The Man Your Man Could Smell Like). According to Hugh Rank’s Model of Persuasion which states *“that persuaders use two major strategies to achieve their goals.  These strategies are nicely set into two main schemas known as (1) intensify, and (2) downplay”* (Rank’s Model). This is evident in the old spice advertisement. The ad uses this theory to persuade its viewers into buying old spice body wash, which is truly effective. The ad further downplays on the audience, “If he stopped using ladies’ scented body wash and switched to Old Spice, he could smell like he’s me” (The Man Your Man Could Smell Like). The old spice guy is saying men who don’t use Old Spice body wash smell like ladies but could smell like a man, like him, if they used Old Spice body wash. In addition, the ad closes with downplaying on the audience again; “Anything is possible when your man smells like old spice and not a lady” (The Man Your Man Could Smell Like). Here again, the ad is touching on the argument it is trying to make, that if you don’t use old spice then you are not a man. This statement at the end of the commercial and the words “old spice” and “not a lady” in a psychological standpoint sticks to the viewers mind and the viewer then associates old spice will make you manlier. The title of the campaign “The Man Your Man Could Smell Like” is downplaying on the audience in a way as well. The title is saying your man does not smell as good as this man, but can.

The use of quick questions “Look down, back up. Where are you?” …”What’s in your hand?” grabs the audience’s attention by involving them. The repetition of words “Not a lady” and “Man” stresses the commercials point about being a man and not a lady. These are important factors to the commercial being persuasive.

In addition, to downplaying on the audience, humor is utilized as well. As with most of the Old Spice commercials humor plays a role. “Look at your man, now back to me, now back at your man, now back to me” (The Man Your Man Could Smell Like). This is just comical and makes the viewer laugh. It is amazing how something this simple is so effective in creating humor. Also, humor in the commercial is evident when a pair of tickets randomly turn into diamonds. The spectator does not expect this to happen and says to themselves “What?” as this occurs. Humor is further illustrated at the end of the commercial when the old spice guy ends up on a horse on the beach. How did this happen? What just happened? Did I miss something? This part is hilarious when he says “I’m on a horse” because just a few seconds ago he was on a boat. Humor, as illustrated, is a successful persuasive tool that engages the audience.

Furthermore, the use of a celebrity figure is used. Celebrity figures in advertising are everywhere and are highly effective. “Consumers relate to the person(s) appearing in the ad: If the celebrity / athlete / star uses the product, then it must be good, so I will purchase it too” (Celebrities in Advertising). Old Spice is famous for their use of celebrity figures in previous ads along with this one. The Old Spice pitchman is actually Isaiah Mustafa. Mustafa was a former wide receiver for the National Football League. His football career was from 1997 to 2000. Mustafa played for various teams including the Seattle Seahawks, Cleveland Browns, and Oakland Raiders. He left playing football to pursue his acting career. According to the New York Daily News Mustafa was voted as the most popular Old Spice pitchman of all time on PopEater; a division of the Daily News. The success of the Old Spice commercials goes to show that celebrity figures do indeed work, “The Man Your Man Could Smell Like” ad is a prime example.

The advertisement starts out with the line “Hello ladies.” This clearly shows that women are being targeted. The ad presents women with the problem that their man is not like the Old Spice guy; does not smell like him, is not as masculine as him. This urges the women to compare their man to him in the commercial. The women want their man to be like him so they want to purchase the product. Another example is “Anything is possible when your man smells like Old Spice” (The Man Your Man Could Smell Like). The campaign is telling women if your man uses Old Spice anything can happen. This is emphasized when the oyster with movie tickets turns into diamonds. This brings up another valid point that women plus diamonds equal like and want. This association helps persuade women just by seeing diamonds into buying Old Spice body wash.

As stated in an Interview: The Making of old Spice’s Commercial: The Man Your Man Could Smell Like, the writers state that women tend to do a lot of the soap and body wash purchasing. This is why the ad was aimed at women. Men too were targeted as well. Old Spice and Old Spice body wash are men’s products and at the end of the ad the slogan “Smell like a man, man” appears. This advertisement does a good job at targeting multiple viewers.

Moreover, sex sells technique is a highly favorable technique used in advertising which is evident in this Old Spice commercial. The ad presents the viewers with an ideal man. He is good looking, strong, basically flawless, and “manly”. By using this product you can become this or your man can become this. This is highly effective as all women want a sexy man. So they buy the product and illustrate the sex sells technique.

In conclusion, persuasion is a key role in selling products today to consumers. Old Spice is a prime example of utilizing persuasion, advertising, and rhetoric techniques. Overall the ad is effective leaving the consumer thinking to provide a rational argument for this course of action.

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