

## ACCENT ON ANTI-SELL SELL

“Go on, please buy my product. Oh go on!” No I’m sorry. That won’t do any more. They’ve heard it all before. They are bored to tears and highly suspicious: it doesn’t matter how many noughts there are in the offer. If they are approached in the same way they have been for the last thirty years, they know all the answers and the whole thing is a big drag.



Shock ‘em. Shock ‘em out of their complacency with anti-sell. Marmite got it right. Boy meets girl. Boy kisses girl. Boy practically throws up in disgust. Slogan: “Marmite. You either love it or hate it.” He obviously loathed it and that was the great anti-sell selling point. The producer is so obviously on the side of the suspicious consumer that he is prepared to pour scorn on his own product. We’re all human beings together and it’s an amusing world.

Not nearly enough is done on these lines. Selling is a dirty word to most people so do anything but sell. You will make your sale in the end just the same. I talked about the weather, football, racing, anything but advertising space. I even mocked the newspapers, but I usually got away with some column inches or even a quarter page. It wasn’t that I didn’t believe in my product, but I wasn’t prepared to sell as if selling was my religion. However hard you try up that ally, you are liable to meet bitter disappointments. And a large bill for your pains.

As selling is a game, make it a game. Everyone is open to entertainment – how about the very opposite to what they are expecting? How about “Chanel stinks” ? Or “Rover – hardly better than a bus” ? Or “Bloggs Insurance – boring yes, cheap no.” ? I dunno. They’re ideas. Copywriters and creative directors today seem so afraid of losing their jobs. The weakest link is between client (Bloggs Bulls Eyes) and account executive (representing the ideas man). There are too many people to get a simple, brilliant idea across. The result is a compromise which bores everyone to tears. No committee ever entertained a human being properly.



Ask any intelligent customer what he would say, he’ll tell you. If the product stinks, it stinks: that doesn’t mean he’s not going to buy it. It is the buying (and the anti-sell) which matters far more than the product. The itch that says “OK”. It hasn’t really dawned that we are in a brand new century and most selling is still conducted on 20<sup>th</sup> century lines. This is incomprehensible to the youth of today, so naturally they don’t buy as frantically as they should. They simply don’t know what your on about.

Anti-sell I believe is the answer. Send the whole thing up. You see it here and there, refreshingly. And yet it has ruthless common sense behind it: to be novel and different, to hit between the eyes, to be memorable, to give the copywriter a break and to rocket your sales so the little red line on your charts is racing across the ceiling.

Anti-sell “There are no salesmen: only the product and you.” At least we won’t be deluged with sales techniques which went out with the dinosaur and commercial breaks which make you want to break off relationships with the telly altogether. They should be the meat of your attention to go with the veg of the programme – a fascinating, fun and filling meal.

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