

Activities



See also
Resource Binder
page 105.

1. In groups, examine a few ads from the ones you collected for Activity 1 on page 70, and decide how closely they follow David Ogilvy's advice for good advertising. Consider the target markets of the ads, the images the ads create, and ways you think the advertisers might have improved their campaigns. Present your conclusions to the class.
2. In groups, use the list of five questions on page 73 that help to recognize a "big idea" in advertising to discuss some recent ad campaigns. You might consider campaigns for fast-food restaurants, soft drinks, batteries, beer, cars, or jeans. Which campaigns would you rate as "big ideas"? Present your choices to the class with your reasons for choosing them. How many of your classmates agree with you?
3. Follow the process Ogilvy described for producing successful advertising, starting with research and ending with "the big idea," and plan an ad campaign. You might choose to advertise a favourite product, such as a soft drink or brand of running shoes, or a service you use frequently, such as a fast-food restaurant, sports club, or library. Create or videotape one ad and present it to the class.

Psychographics

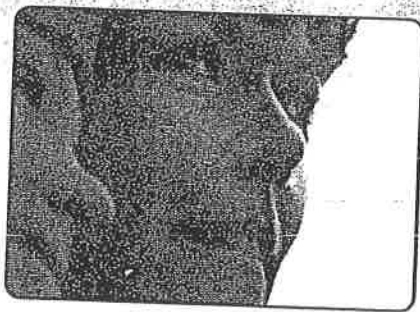
BY WILLIAM MEYERS

Researchers have discovered that magazine readers spend little more than two seconds glancing over a page. On TV, a typical commercial "spot" is only 15- or 30-seconds long, and many viewers "flip" or "channel surf" through commercial breaks. In order to connect quickly with today's consumers, advertisers often create strong emotional appeals based on "psychographics," an analysis of people's attitudes, beliefs, desires, and needs. Although a creative team cannot predict how each individual will react to a campaign, psychographics gives them a good idea of how large groups within the population will react. As you read the following article about one psychographic approach called VALS (Values and Life-Styles), consider how you feel about the approach and the assumptions it makes. Try to determine to which group(s) you and people you know belong.

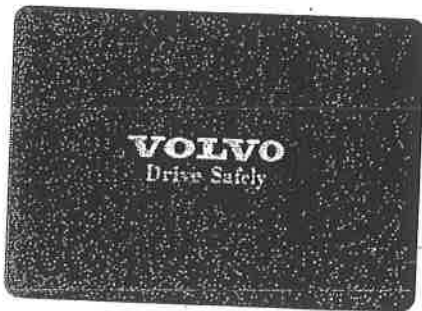
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The world according to VALS is simple. There are essentially five basic groups of citizens—Belongers, Emulators, Emulator-Achievers, Societally Conscious Achievers, and the Need-Directed.

VALS tells us that almost one out of three citizens in the United States is a *Belonger*—the typical traditionalist, the cautious and conforming conservative. The Belonger believes in God, country, and family. The lifeblood of the Belonger's world is a strong community consciousness. Change is his or her arch-enemy. Without a secure, stable, and structured society, this staunch defender of the status quo is unable to cope.



VOICE-OVER: Both mother and daughter believe that a car saved their lives that day.



▲ Which of the VALS groups would this ad most appeal to?

The Belonger's consumer profile reflects his old-fashioned view of things. He usually drives a Dodge or a Plymouth; he drinks Coke, Pepsi, or Budweiser; he eats at McDonald's with the family; he loves Jell-O.

Emulators are not so set in their ways. They are a small but impressionable group of young people in desperate search of an identity and a place in the adult working world. These kids, who represent about 15 percent of the American population, will do almost anything to fit in. Most of them lack self-confidence and are discouraged about their prospects. They envision little future for themselves in our society. They compensate for this pessimism with unabashed personal hedonism. Confused and vulnerable, Emulators will purchase products from advertisers who offer solutions to their postadolescent dilemmas. In dealing with Emulators, advertisers prey on their insecurity.

Chevrolet, for example, has sold hundreds of thousands of Camaros to these uncertain youngsters by positioning the vehicle as the coolest car on the market.

Emulator-Achievers, America's materialists, have already made it. These acquisitive consumers often own a Mercedes; they feel most comfortable with such "uptown" brand names as Dom Perignon, Tiffany, or Gucci; and they have to have the latest in high-tech toys. But Emulator-Achievers, approximately 20 percent of the population, are in a funk. Once they believed the sky was the limit; today they feel frustrated, perhaps a bit cheated, stuck just below the top rung of the economic ladder. Despite their relative affluence, three quarters of them fear they won't

be able to attain their fiscal goals during the coming decade.

Madison Avenue cheers up Emulator-Achievers with commercials that transform everyday items into accoutrements of accomplishment, success, and taste. Advertisers convince these compulsive consumers that by purchasing certain products they will be seen as the modern aristocrats they seek to be.

Societally Conscious Achievers are the flower children of America's consumer culture. They care more about inner peace and environmental safety than about financial success and elegant surroundings. Personal, not professional, fulfillment matters most to these individualists. Societally Conscious Achievers, constituting approximately 20 percent of the U.S. population, are experimental—they will try anything from acupuncture to Zen, as long as it fits into their uncomplicated life-style. Many of them are dropouts from the world of commerce—reformed strivers who no longer see the need for conspicuous consumption.

Societally Conscious Achievers often shop for their clothing by mail, choosing L.L. Bean moccasins over Gucci loafers, and they usually drive small foreign cars—Mazda, Honda, Volvo, or Subaru. Lighter wines or such wholesome beverages as herbal tea, fruit juice, or bottled water are preferred by these inner-directed citizens.

Need-Directed Americans are the survivors, the people struggling to sustain themselves on subsistence incomes. Mostly welfare recipients, Social Security beneficiaries, and minimum-wage earners, these citizens, who represent close to 15 percent of the country, aren't consumers in the true sense of the word. They're so busy trying to make ends meet that they don't really have time to worry about the type of beer they drink or the image projected by the cigarettes they smoke. The Need-Directed aren't driving new cars or acquiring state-of-the-art personal computers, and they rarely have enough money to take the family out for even a fast-food meal.

—*The Image-Makers*, 1984

Activities

- Jot down the names of some characters in popular TV shows who would fit into each of the four groups.
 - How useful do you think VALS would be in identifying potential consumers for a product?
- In your media log, describe the members of your family or some of your friends and decide which VALS group each person belongs to. Many people fit into more than one group.
 - How do you feel about slotting people into groups such as these?
- With a group, survey newspapers and magazines to collect a number of ads that you think will appeal to each of the VALS groups. Discuss your findings with another group or the class.



See also Video 1,
Excerpt 9.