

### IELTS Speaking Part 3: Advertising

1. In general, what are the pros and cons of advertising?

Well, looking at the advantages, I'd say that the main one is that it can help increase the awareness of a product or service, and in a lot of cases, you can reach a very wide target market through advertising, for example with TV and Internet ads.

And as for the drawbacks, well I suppose the most obvious one is the cost, because as I'm sure you know, advertising isn't cheap, and you have to pay for it up front, before you can start enjoying the benefits. So in other words, there's quite a big element of risk to it, because you know, you could end up losing quite a lot of money if your advertising campaign isn't successful.

2. Do you think there's too much advertising in our daily lives?

Yeah, I'd say there is, because it seems that wherever we look nowadays, there's something being advertised. You know, it's almost impossible going anywhere without seeing an advert of some sort. So it kind of feels like we're being constantly bombarded with information, left, right and centre! And for the most part, people don't have the slightest desire to see any of it. So yeah, I think there's way too much advertising at the moment!

3. What are the different ways that products and services are advertised in society today?

I'd say there's a pretty huge number of ways, you know, such as TV, radio, newspaper, and Internet, just to name a few. And then on top of that, there are also more indirect ways that companies advertise, like product placing, which seems to be happening a lot now in films and TV programs. So yeah, I mean there are countless ways to advertise, and we'd probably be here all day if I went through them all!

4. What's the most frequently used method of advertising?

Well nowadays I'd say it's probably online advertising, because people are spending so much time on the Internet. And companies have basically latched on to this fact, because almost every website you go on now has advertising of some sort on it.

5. Which do you think is the most effective means of advertising?

Well I'm no expert, but I suppose it kind of depends on the product you're trying to sell. So for example, if it's a mass-market product like shampoo, then I guess TV advertising would be the most effective, as it reaches the widest audience, and also uses moving images and sounds, unlike newspaper ads, which just use still images.

But if, on the other hand, it's a niche product which only has a very small target customer group, then I'd say you're better off using a more focused means of advertising, for example putting ads on websites which are related to that particular product or service, because that way, the ad will only be viewed by people who might actually be interested in it, and it will also be a lot more cost-effective than using other ways to advertise.

6. What kinds of products do you think are most suitable to be advertised?

That's a difficult question, and I've never really thought it before, but I guess it would be those which are new on the market. Because if you think about it, those are the products which people don't really know about, and if they don't know about them, then chances are they're not gonna buy them. So yeah I think it's logical that these are the products which are most in need of advertising.

7. Do you think the number of advertisements will increase in the future?

Yes, I imagine it's very likely that it will, because I mean, it's already increased considerably from 20 years ago. You know, it seems that everywhere you look now, you can see advertising, for example, in lifts, on the street, and so I can't see any reason why it won't go on increasing, especially seeing as commercialism in society seems to be getting more and more prevalent, which, I think you would agree, goes hand in hand with advertising!

8. Do you think there should be some controls or restrictions placed on the advertising industry?

Yeah, I think it's fair to say that there should be, because otherwise, you know, there would be no limit to the amount of advertising we're subject to. For example, if there were no restrictions on where adverts could be placed, then I think everywhere would just get filled up with them, which might not be so bad in a city, but in countryside areas it would really spoil the natural scenery.

So that's one thing, and I suppose another aspect that should be controlled to some extent is the content of adverts, the reason being that a lot of companies at the moment seem to get away with making their products look better than they really are. I mean, one example that comes to mind is the instant noodle ads where they show

all these lovely freshly-cooked vegetables being added into the noodles, and it looks really tasty, but in actual fact the vegetables you really get in them are dried and shrivelled, and most likely have lost all of their nutritional value. So I think something should really be done about this kind of thing, as it's just not right!

9. What impact on people does music in advertisements have?

That's a good question, and I suppose one impact it has is that it makes adverts more memorable. So in other words, if an advert has a catchy tune to it, it kind of tends to stay in the mind longer, if you know what I mean!

10. What effects can advertisements have on young children?

Well, I guess they can have both positive and negative effects on children. For example, looking on the positive side, I think it's possible that some adverts can help give children a better understanding of the things they see and use in their daily life.

But I would say it's more often the case that adverts can have a negative effect, firstly because a lot of the things which are advertised aren't suitable for young children, such as alcoholic drinks for example, and secondly, a lot of advertising which targets young children is for things like sweets and chocolate biscuits, which aren't all that good for kids, but seeing such advertisements will make them pester their parents to buy these things for them, which I know because this is exactly what I did when I was younger!

11. What is the purpose of advertising?

Well I suppose the main purpose is just to increase the sales of whatever product or service is being advertised, otherwise there's not really much point in doing it, is there! I mean, if you look at all the coca-cola ads there are, all they're really aiming to do is maintain the image of coke as being, you know, cool and fashionable to drink, which will consequently lead to more coke being sold. So yeah, I think it's pretty much as simple as that really!

12. Do you think most advertisements achieve their purpose?

That's a good question, and I honestly have no idea whatsoever, but my feeling would be that most of them do, yeah, because I mean, otherwise companies wouldn't go on advertising, would they! You know, it wouldn't be as popular a thing to do if companies found that it didn't work for them. So yeah, I guess this kind of goes to show that the majority of adverts do actually achieve their purpose.

13. What makes a good advertisement?

Well, thinking about it, I'd say a good advertisement is one which makes you want to buy the product or service its advertising, so in other words, it should be persuasive, because I mean, after all, that's the whole point of an advert, isn't it!

14. What types of advertisements do people remember best?

Ok, let me just have a little think about it please.....um... what adverts are the most memorable?.....um...ok, yeah, for me, and I guess probably for most other people, the adverts I tend to remember most are those which are funny, you know, there's something in them that makes people laugh.

And as well as this, I'd say another thing that memorable ads tend to have in common is a catchy slogan, you know, one that sticks in your mind. For example, there's a milk tea ad on TV where one guy says to his girlfriend, "You are my Youlemei", which is the name of the milk tea, and because of that one line, I remember the whole ad really clearly. And I guess this is the case with a lot of other ads as well.

15. Some people say that the high cost of advertising adds to the price of products and that if advertising was banned, this would make products cheaper. Do you agree?

Yeah, I guess it kind of makes sense, doesn't it! You know, some companies, like Nike, for example, spend an absolute fortune on advertising, and so if they didn't do this, their costs would be reduced dramatically, which I'm sure would enable them to lower their prices.

16. Do you think the brand of a product is important to people?

Yeah, I'd say it definitely is, because if you think about it, a product's brand represents um, how can I put it,...um... I suppose you could say it kind of acts as a promise to customers. So in other words, what I guess I'm trying to say is that people choose to buy certain brands of products over others because they essentially trust that brand.

And just to give you an example, people spend a crazy amount of money on luxury brands like LV and Prada for the simple fact that they know those brands are trustworthy and represent high quality.

And also, what with the huge choice we now have for everything we buy, I think brands play an extremely big role in helping us narrow down the choice and find something that we'll be happy with. So yeah, I'd say they're pretty important!

Notes:

*pay for it up front* – 预先付费

*there's quite a big element of risk to it* – 有一定风险

*you could end up losing quite a lot of money* – 你可能最后会损失一大笔金额。

*advertising campaign* – 广告活动

*we're being constantly bombarded with information* 我们的生活充斥着海量的信息。

*left, right and centre* – 四面八方

*for the most part* – 通常来说

*people don't have the slightest desire* – 人们通常是无欲无求的

*on top of that* – 其次更重要是、除了...之外

*product placing* – 植入性广告

*companies have basically latched on to this fact* – 公司意识到这个事实

*mass-market product* – 大众性产品

*niche product* – 小众化产品

*you're better off using a more focused means of advertising* 用更专注化的广告是比较好

*ad / advert* = advertisement (in spoken English we often just say "ad" or "advert")

*TV commercial* = TV advertisement (commercial is only used for TV or radio ads)

*chances are* = 很有可能

*goes hand in hand with* = 是并存的

*... advertising we're subject to* 我们都受著的广告

*get away with* = (做坏事而) 未受惩罚; (做冒险之事而) 未遭遇不测 *If you get away with doing something wrong or risky, you do not suffer any punishment or other bad consequences because of it.*

*in actual fact* = 事实上

*shrivelled* = 干枯, 干瘪

*a catchy tune* = 易记的旋律

*a catchy slogan* = 好记的口号

*it's more often the case that* = 更多情况

*pester their parents* = 缠着父母

*otherwise there's not really much point in doing it* = ... 否则的话, 做(广告)没有什么意义

*this goes to show* = 这就说明.....

*it should be persuasive* = 应该有说服力的

*that's the whole point of an advert* = 那就是广告的目的

*sticks in your mind* = 铭记在心

*it makes sense* = 有道理

*spend an absolute fortune on* = *spend a crazy amount of money on* 花一大笔钱