

Joanna Mikosz*

Press Advertising – Varieties and Sub-Varieties Methods of Promoting the Press

Apart from the poster, the press is the oldest advertising medium. On the one hand, it is a mature form of the art of interpersonal communication, created on the basis of the experience of generations of outstanding artists. On the other, an ultra-modern, fast-evolving mass medium. At first, advertising was visually unattractive, characterized by a monotony of colour and limited graphic solutions. Sometimes it was even difficult to determine the kind of recipient to whom it was addressed. However, much has changed since that time. Modernity has given press advertising a high quality of print and paper, technologies for managing the content and unlimited possibilities of inserting and connecting different forms of promotion within the press.

Until the political transformation, press advertising was popular in Poland, and advertisers readily printed their advertisements in this medium¹. They were aware that the press is a universally available mass medium and has the most diversified public. Editorial teams also bore in mind that “socialist advertising is a planned activity, which consists in leading consumers to useful information about particular goods and services”².

Press advertisements could also be private (e.g. obituaries) or public (information about open tenders). Food products, e.g. margarine, and vocational courses were also advertised. Editorial teams asked their readers whether they: “subscribe to the Soviet press?”³.

Advertising in the Polish press was predominantly in black and white. The turning point came in the 1970^s, when the multicoloured advertisement was born⁴.

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¹ Z. Bajka, „Reklama w mediach”, in: „Dziennikarstwo i świat mediów”, ed. Z Bauer, E. Chudziński, Universitas, Cracow 2000, p. 375.

² Ibid., p. 376.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

Polish press advertising started to develop dynamically only after 1989. At this time, the advertisement began to stand out in newspapers and became visually attractive. The real revolution took place after 1992, when large German publishing groups started to introduce coloured magazines for women into the Polish press market⁵.

Modern press advertising

Currently, press advertising does not restrict itself to the static form. It also has multimedia equivalents in online newspapers and digital editions, which, in addition to the static image, may use moving (shorts films, animations), sound and interactive (quizzes, rebuses) forms to engage the advertisement's addressee. Moreover, apart from the visual media, there are also those engaging other senses, e.g. fragrance advertising or free samples of products (creams, shampoos, sweets). Undoubtedly, this distinguishes this form of advertisement from others, giving advertisers an opportunity to present their products to potential customers and maintain awareness of their product's existence.

Press advertising is one of the best ways for a company to communicate with the market. Its advantages primarily include the high frequency of information and the ability to convey accurate and broad advertising information. The communication with recipients may occur at different times and with different frequency. It is significant whether the given publication is a daily newspaper or a magazine, and if it has a general or specialized character. We must not forget about the geographical division, which differentiates between the regional and national press. Aside from the aforementioned factors, the efficiency of advertising depends on the circulation of a newspaper. The higher the circulation, the more likely it is that the advertisement will reach a wider audience.

Varieties of press advertising

Press advertisements are divided into a few varieties and sub-varieties:

classified advertisements – they constitute the most profitable source of income and are concentrated in different categories (e.g. vehicles). It should be emphasized that classified advertising is considered to be an excellent barometer of a country's economic condition – they are followed by economists, who examine the distribution of proportions – employers and job seekers;

⁵ Ibid.

illustrated classified advertisements – apart from the standard types of classified advertisements, newspapers also print illustrated advertisements in classified advertisement sections. They are known as framed classified advertisements and are usually located among those concerning vehicles and properties. They may contain various content except for legal information and announcements. It should be stressed, however, that newspapers face growing competition in the classified advertising market. There are, for example, free info-lines, which provide the majority of information regarding vehicles, different services and send suitable offers by mail or fax. Likewise, there are also *on-line* classified advertisements or cable television transmissions on the subject of properties, the construction industry or job market;

modular advertisements – this group contains almost all advertisements with the exception of classified advertisements and legal or public announcements. They are mostly colourful and include graphic elements. These advertisements are divided into local and national;

local advertisements – advertisements placed in a newspaper by local companies, organizations or private individuals. This kind of press has a particular audience and advertisements published in it should be directed towards the specific segment.

Mail as well as radio and television regional advertising (cable television) are its main rivals in this market. Owing to the expansion of suburban areas, community papers and advertising brochures have become the main competitors in the fight for the advertising budgets of companies⁶.

national advertisements – used predominantly by nationwide companies, e.g. supermarket chains, restaurants, hotels.

joint advertising – it is – as the name suggests – a joint medium for local and national advertisers. Joint advertising is planned and ordered by a local advertiser, but partially or entirely covered by a national one. It also contributes to building good relationships with distributors and retailers as well as allowing the exercise of a certain degree of control over the local advertising.

Possibilities of publishing advertisements

Advertisers are given many options to promote a given product or service. Their messages may be located in different places in a newspaper and may take different forms⁷:

⁶ <http://www.ithink.pl/artykuly/biznes/re-kla-ma-i-marketing/reklama-prasowa-w-usa/> [access: 21.11.2010].

⁷ A. Jupowicz-Ginalska, „Marketing medialny”, Difin, Warsaw 2010, p. 139.

choosing the edition (e.g. newspapers and supplements),
choosing the section (e.g. vehicles, properties, work, tourism, health etc.),
choosing the subsection (e.g. car wanted/for sale, flat for rent, work wanted, looking for work etc.),

shaping the content of an advertisement using word processing (colour, format, boldface),

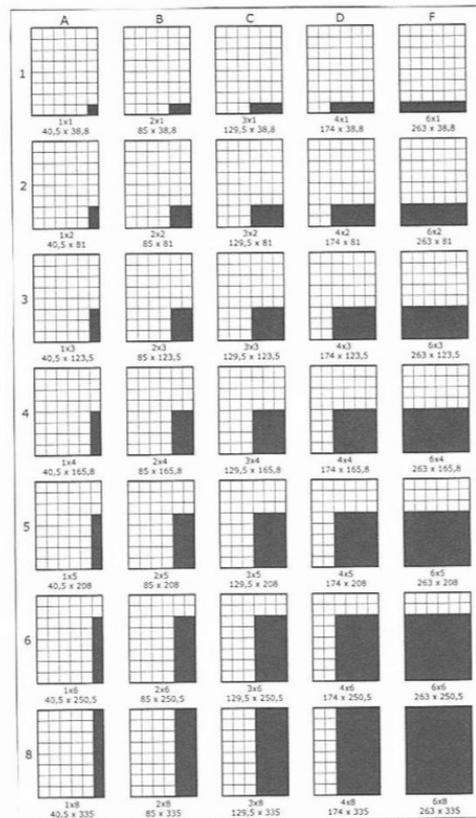
choosing the possible **dates** of issuing the advertisement 6 months in advance,

making an immediate **payment**, with a transfer from 23 banks or via credit card,

receiving a **PRO FORMA invoice** and VAT invoice (in the case of companies),

reissuing advertisements at new dates, creating subsequent advertisements on the basis of a previous one, controlling issuing dates and the status of an order.

Illustration 1: Examples of grids of modules. The coloured areas indicate where advertisements are placed



Source: A. Niczyperowicz, *Dziennikarstwo od kuchni*, TS, Poznan 2001, p. 249.

The structure of advertising rates

Newspapers may be divided into two categories: those with a uniform advertising rate without any discounts, and those with a negotiable rate and the possibility of choosing a certain discount. The most popular discounts are based on the number of repetitions or the purchase of advertising space. Spatial discount means that the advertiser pays a proportionally lower price for a higher number of advertisements. Furthermore, we distinguish advertisements with or without a choice of placing⁸.

Financial situation in the press advertising market

Currently, the decrease in press readership and greater competition in advertising are the biggest problems affecting the situation of newspapers. Editorial teams profit from circulation revenues, subscriptions and obviously the activity of advertisers. For the press industry to remain the dominant vehicle for advertising, the press must face many challenges. They include the constantly progressing decrease in readership and the fragmentation of readership circles. Newspapers no longer constitute the basic source of information. The participation of press advertising in the advertising market is another factor. Magazines were always the main carrier of local advertising, yet now they have to compete with local radio, cable television, local press (free press as well). Customer orientation is also immensely significant. Advertisers require higher effectiveness and assistance with accurately reaching the recipient. Therefore, the fight for readers and advertisers has forced editorial teams to make wider use of marketing research and consumer opinion surveys in order to maintain the leading position among other media. The attempt to identify the readers and advertisers has become the key to future success. Press readership surveys should, therefore, be closely connected with advertisers, gathered and made available for them.

Advertising must not be a matter of an accident. It should be kept in mind that there are many different press readers. The target group may be established, among others, on the basis of its interests, reading preferences, income and lifestyle. The ability to discover the reading needs (e.g. teens eagerly read rumours about celebrities, fashion sections; young and professionally active people are interested in subjects connected with work, the older generation – in guides) of recipients has a strategic significance.

⁸ J.T. Russell, W.R. Lane, „Reklama według Ottona Kleppnera”, Felberg SJA, Cracow 1996, p. 301.

In order to keep advertisers and readers, new products and solutions must be created. These may include presents, discounts and promotional vouchers. What is more, editorial teams must redesign graphic layout and move with the times. Better print and higher quality of pictures raise the prestige of a newspaper. It should be stressed, though, that the evolution of graphic layout cannot be sudden. Readers are accustomed to a specific colour scheme and arrangement of information, especially if the paper has a long publishing history. Every abrupt change is remarkably risky, therefore it should not be introduced without testing the new formula on a local market.

Methods of press promotion

The crisis of paper media cannot be waited out: “a certain business model, in which papers were financed from advertising and sales revenues, has been exhausted”⁹. It is still not known how to “convince the recipients of papers to pay for something that can be currently read on the Internet for free”¹⁰. There are two solutions, discarding the paper version of a magazine and moving onto the Internet (thereby limiting the expenses related to print and distribution) or searching for new ways of making the press attractive.

One of the solutions aimed at attracting readers to the press, and by the same token – advertisers, involves enriching the main edition with supplements. We may talk about different types of supplements – ranging from thematic ones, which enhance the main edition of a paper, to gadgets such as decorated porcelain, post stamps, volumes of verse, Bibles, cook books and encyclopaedias. Accurately chosen supplements increase the attractiveness of promotion: “papers do not advertise themselves, but, in fact, the product that can be bought with them”¹¹. Sales are also favourably affected by celebrities promoting a given item of merchandise. Famous, popular or esteemed people are the most convincing.

Journalists who rebel against this trend are of the opinion that people often forget what a newspaper actually is, because the industry of supplements has become uncontrollable. Nevertheless, these protests do not stop the publishers. Supplements are a very lucrative business and sometimes determine whether a paper will be able to remain on the press market: “Almost everyone who buys advertising space in newspapers realizes that their actual sales are much lower

⁹ R. Woś, „Prasa gatunek zagrożony. Trzy scenariusze mediów papierowych”, *Dziennik Gazeta Prawna* 2009, No. 208, p. 10.

¹⁰ T. Zachurski, „W skórze dinozaura”, *Dzienniki* 2009, a suplement to *Press* 2009, No. 17, p. 33.

¹¹ S. Wysocka, „Włoski renesans”, *Press* 2007, No. 10, p. 52.

than those declared – since they often refer to the sales of a supplement, and not the paper itself¹².

Editorial teams also launch websites, where all available series, supplements and gadgets are detailed. They contain information regarding prices or the ability to subscribe. This is yet another place where advertisers may publish their advertisements.

Thematic supplements are characterized by a wide range of issues: from health and beauty to construction and architecture. This creates huge opportunities for advertisers. Thematic supplements are often immensely popular and, as in the case of gadgets, readers often buy the paper to familiarize themselves with the content of a supplement¹³. Thus, advertisers acquire another source in which they can publish their messages. Importantly, it is not an accidental source. Readers of supplements have particular interests and it is easier for them to specify the kind of product they are looking for.

Editorial teams of glossy magazines, addressed mainly to women, more and more often cooperate with companies which publish discount coupons in papers. The publisher usually signs a contract with a particular shopping centre or a chain of shops, less often with a single outlet. Its task is to publicize a promotional campaign and deliver advertising products: “for the time being, Polish sellers assumed the role of sales promoters”¹⁴. The benefit is mutual: campaigns with discount coupons give the publisher measurable effects in the shape of increased sales of their publications, and shopping centres gain new customers. During promotional campaigns they are also visited by a higher number of clients – it is a mutual exchange of services: “when we like a product advertised in a paper, we immediately check where it can be bought. These kinds of campaigns are supposed to build a positive image of the magazine among readers”¹⁵.

The mutual collaboration between editorial teams and shopping centres brings financial profits. That is why more and more editorial teams decide on this type of undertaking. Interestingly, this concerns not only magazines, but also the daily press.

The fall in newspaper readership is global. Publishers – also foreign ones – are searching for solutions to stop this process. The initiative introduced to the German market constitutes an interesting way of fighting for a recipient and advertiser. The Germans win customers by distributing newspapers through companies specializing in lending the press, that is the so-called *Lesezirkel*: “The Germans prefer to order the press to their homes rather than buy it at a newsagent’s”¹⁶. It

¹² G. Kopacz, „Powrót do korzeni”, *Press* 2008, No. 8, p. 65.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ A. Wiczerczak, „Gazeta z promocją”, *Press* 2008, No. 8, p. 60.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 58.

¹⁶ K. Domagała-Pereira, „Pisma z wypożyczalni”, *Press* 2007, No. 9, p. 50.

is one of the most important ways of distributing newspapers after traditional subscription and street sale. This way of delivering the press to the reader is immensely popular, e.g. the company “Leserkreis Daheim” from Hamburg has 25% of the readership market share¹⁷. The press is delivered to households, waiting rooms, hairdressing salons and restaurants. German companies use cars to deliver folders to customers. Folders are lent for a week and brought to home, work or another place chosen by the customer. After a week, the folder is exchanged for the next one. In order to win customers, companies advertise themselves on the radio and TV, and on websites. Readership analyses indicate that papers distributed in such a way reach over 10.8 million readers every week, i.e. almost 17% of adult inhabitants of Germany¹⁸. It is worth adding that part of the income of those companies originates from selling advertisements. Thanks to the cooperation of readership circles, an advertisement may simultaneously appear in over 110 thousand folders¹⁹. The biggest readership circles just created their own branches, which mediate in the sales of advertising space in the case of regional or national campaigns. The most popular transmission is the so-called: “title poster” – an advertisement of 180x200 mm stuck on the covers of papers. An advertisement may also take the form of a magazine supplement or a leaflet, as well as of samples of products. Furthermore, calendars, CDs and DVDs are also on sale²⁰.

Another way of promoting the press involves making it available to read for free in newsagent’s shops and libraries, e.g. “Empik” or “Traffic Club”: “It is not only a point of sale, but also a certain kind of a reading room, an open gate to the world of culture”²¹. Publishers claim that the unsold copies are not a loss for them: “it must be at most in the order of tens of thousands copies in the whole country. In comparison with our circulation, which reaches millions, it is insignificant. We have no way of keeping a record of such readership. This may have positive results with reference to brand recognition”²². Some of the copies are intentionally exhibited on shelves so that customers can browse them and check if there is something of interest to them in a given issue. It is also an excellent opportunity to acquaint oneself with the advertising message.

The aforementioned newsagent’s shops are treated as press reading rooms, places where one may become engrossed in reading. These shops – in order to create an atmosphere that favours reading – are furnished with armchairs and tables with lamps, which give a soft light.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 51.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ K. Rumowska, „Czytacz czytelnikiem”, *Press* 2009, No. 11, p. 39.

²² Ibid.

“We are opening the doors!” is the name of a German campaign aimed at inviting the readers of “Bocholter – Borkener Volksblatt” daily to visit the company’s offices²³. The purpose of this undertaking is not only to promote the newspaper, but also to make the readers grow attached to it. Anyone may visit the editorial office, printing house and see, step by step, how a paper is made. The “We are opening the doors!” campaign met with the approval of readers and received a Fergagz award for an innovative marketing activity.

Publishers also introduce innovative solutions directed especially at advertisers, e.g. they attach customer cards, discounts or tickets for various events to the subscription. Moreover, “Tom’s Book” portal was launched – a kind of virtual diary, where every user may put an interesting press clipping. An advertising campaign entitled “Newspapers. If you read, you understand” was also initiated. Advertisements in the daily press presented a few themes, whose common features could only be discovered by a person reading the press regularly²⁴.

It is worth adding that the publishers of “Bocholter – Borkener Volksblatt” decided to broaden the range of their undertaking. They rightly noticed that the whole hope of the press readership is in the youngest generation. Therefore, they organize different classes which extend the knowledge of journalism and press studies, in order to encourage the young to buy the press and develop their reading passion. The classes included “Newspaper workshops” and “Flirt with a newspaper”. The children learn about the specificity of editorial work, familiarize themselves with the journalist’s trade, paint illustrations to articles and create newspapers from cuttings²⁵. This is the first project of its type, supported by “Spiegel-Gruppe”²⁶.

However, this was not the only initiative that was supposed to persuade young people to read the press. Newspapers for kids, which in a very simple way explain political, economic or social events, were also created in Germany. They include: “Das Wahltheater” and “Dein Spiegel”: “Such activities are expected to have long lasting effects. Their aim is to strengthen the positive image of the publisher and accustom young readers to local media. We want to win children as a separate target group”²⁷.

The new publishing initiative was met with great interest and a very positive reception, since it is characterized by full professionalism. The more challenging – because of the issues they are dealing with – subjects devoted to politics and economy are interwoven with lighter content. The papers contain travelogues and interviews with celebrities such as singers or sportsmen; the children also learn

²³ K. Domagała-Pereira, „Pisma”, op. cit., p. 36.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 37.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 46.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 47.

the arcana of journalists' work. What is more, editorial teams collaborate with educationalists and specialists from different fields and have telephone conversations with young readers. In addition, the papers have their Internet equivalents as well as radio broadcasts.

Publications of this segment (and their Internet equivalents), as well as radio broadcasts, are very popular among advertisers. Advertising transmissions are bought by producers of childrenswear, telecommunications companies, chains of discount shops and book publishers.

One of the ways of promoting the press involves changing the system of its visual identification²⁸. It is an increasingly popular trend among Polish and international press distributors. They want to attract readers and advertisers with new services and draw their attention with a new layout.

New logos also appear, e.g. in Croatia, the unfashionable typeface of the serif font was replaced with an emoticon – the letter D with a smile attached in order to enhance the positive perception of the company. In Ukraine, a comma replaced the letter “I” in the logo of “Empik” bookshop to change the way in which it is perceived. This effort was aimed at expanding the shop's assortment.

In Poland, a new logo was acquired by the press distributor Ruch. As the company emphasizes: “Introducing a new logo was part of the strategy aimed at changing the image of the Company. The renewed logo will rejuvenate this image. It is also a symbol of the dynamic changes which are taking place in *Ruch*”²⁹.

The change of visual identification is also followed by transformations of newsagents' shops. All these activities are intended to open up to different age groups; concert stages, cafés, even merry-go-rounds appear in them. Moreover, they organize meetings with writers and the authors of new publications (this attracts advertisers as well), which are accompanied by a large-scale promotional campaign.

An attractive and unconventional cover is one of the effective ways of attracting readers. The solutions which are extraordinary and full of unusual ideas always rivet the attention of consumers and distinguish the magazine through their atypical nature (in terms of use of colours, unconventional graphic solutions or even shocking photographs). An interesting example which arouses great interest is “Esquire” monthly. Its publishers, departing from the current trends, radically revolutionized the model. The magazine's cover is a real masterpiece: “graphic designers play with pictures, colour and, above all, the typeface, almost abandoning colourful backgrounds”³⁰. The content on the cover is a characteristic feature; titles are arranged so that one distinctive sentence or surname emerges

²⁸ D. Kalinowska, „Zmiana barw”, *Press* 2007, No. 12, p. 9.

²⁹ <http://www.ruch.com.pl/> [access: 21.11.2010].

³⁰ A. Pukiel, „Siła oprawy”, *Press* 2008, No. 8.

from a mix of illegible letters. This content is interspersed with remarkable pictures of the character, which are supposed to intrigue and attract attention.

The idea of a 27-year-old economy student from Berlin, Hendrik Tiedermann, met with great interest by readers, publishers and advertisers. He created a personalized newspaper entitled “Personal News”, which was placed on a “Niiu.de” portal³¹. The price of the periodical is relatively low – 1,80 euros for everyone and 1,20 euros for students.

The target group is mainly comprised of university students, but its resources are also available to other users: “In our project, it is the reader who creates the newspaper. While creating a personal edition, it will be possible to choose the news which is of interest to a particular person”³².

The initiative of creating a personalized paper met with approval. The publisher has already signed contracts with five hundred information suppliers³³. If the idea works out, the paper will also appear in other major cities in Germany. Its originator also suggested some innovative solutions to advertisers – advertisements will be adjustable to the personal preferences of a reader. The dailies will include additional pages with advertisements individually tailored to the user’s profile.

Recently, a rapid development of medical magazines has been observed on the Polish press market. Great potential has been noticed in this group. Professional magazines make it possible to accurately reach particular professional or scientific groups. The publishers of these periodicals prepare advertising offers and aim them directly at pharmaceutical companies, which – in order to reach doctors with the advertisement – advertise themselves in the trade papers. Pharmaceutical companies treat advertisements in these magazines as an indispensable element of their marketing strategy, which complements the activities of their medical representatives: “Advertising presence in trade titles is the most appropriate strategy for our products. Legal restrictions allow for advertising prescription medicines only in the media intended for doctors”³⁴. Physicians admit that this kind of message appeals to them: “I pay attention to whether, perhaps, a new medicine from my field has been introduced, or a cheaper replacement I can tell patients about”³⁵. Therefore, the benefit is mutual. The market of this segment is thriving and the circulation of magazines is growing. Free papers, which are sent to doctors, distributed at conventions and handed over to medical students, also contribute to winning new recipients and advertisers.

³¹ K. Domagała-Pereira, „Dziennik na miarę”, *Press* 2009, No. 11, p. 8.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ M. Grym, „Medyczny impet”, *Press* 2008, No. 4, p. 56.

³⁵ Ibid.

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Press advertising is an immensely well-developed form of advertising. It has very long historical roots and a rich tradition. Its popularity is undoubtedly affected by the belief that the written word is more reliable and less doubtful. By means of the press, it is possible to reach a particular group of recipients and convey more detailed information about a product than in other forms of advertising. This leads to the fact that press advertising is still profitable and enjoys large popularity. What is more, it has a dominant position on the Polish advertising market, which creates greater opportunities for investing in marketing and improving advertisements, as well as making them more attractive through adding colours, photographs, maps, etc.

The considerations presented above reflect that the sales of a given product (even by several dozen percent) are largely affected by advertising it in the press. The bigger the surface of an advertisement on normal pages in newspapers, and the more interesting the way of presenting products, the bigger the chance of selling and popularizing the brand. However, being mindful of the continuously growing competition, the press must create new, innovative methods of attracting readers and advertisers.

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(Summary)

In the text entitled “Press advertising – varieties and sub-varieties. Methods of promoting the press”, the author discusses press advertising, which is a fast developing mass-media phenomenon. Modernity has granted press advertising a high quality of print and paper, as well as infinite possibilities of combining various promotional forms with the press. The author argues that press advertising is one of the best ways in which a company can communicate with the market. Its advantage is, above all, a high frequency of distributing the contents and the possibility of conveying accurate advertising information in vast quantities.

Keywords: press advertising, promotion of the press.