

The 5 Stages of Advertising Strategy Development

	AWARENESS	SOPHISTICATION	MASS DESIRE		STRATEGY
	Aware of your product	Knows what it does	Know they NEED it	Know they WANT it	Approach
Stage 1	X	X	X	X	See below ...
Stage 2	X	X			
Stage 3		X		X	
Stage 4			X		
Stage 5					

Approach

Stage 1:

The most aware

The customer knows of your product -- knows what it does -- knows he wants it.

Your headline -- in fact, your entire ad -- need state little more than the name of your product and a bargain price.

Stage 2:

The customer knows of the product but doesn't yet want it

Here, your prospect isn't completely aware of all your product does, or isn't convinced of how well it does it, or hasn't yet been told how much better it does it now.

Most advertising falls into the stage 2 category. Here your headline is faced with one of 7 tasks. Refer to page 17 of [BA] per more details.

Stage 3:

How to introduce new products

The prospect either knows, or recognizes immediately, that he wants what the product does; but he doesn't yet know that there is a product -- your product -- that will do it for him.

Adverts in stage three must do two things: pinpoint the ill-defined as yet and crystallized desire, and crystallize that desire and its solution so sharply that each and every prospect will recognize it at a glance.

There are three steps to achieving this:

- 1 -- name the desire and/or its solution in your headline
- 2 -- prove the solution can be accomplished.
- 3 -- and show the mechanism of that accomplishment is contained within your product.

Stage 4:

How to introduce products that solve needs

The prospect has -- not the desire -- but the need. He recognizes the need immediately. But he doesn't yet realize the connection between the fulfillment of that need and your product.

This is the problem-solving ad. It might be thought of as a special case of the desire and mentioned in stage three, since the technique of writing it is so similar. You start by naming the need and/or solution in the headline. Then dramatize the need so vividly the prospect realizes just how badly they want the solution. And then present your product as the inevitable solution.

Stage 5:

How to open up a completely unaware market

And finally -- the most difficult. The prospect is either unaware of his desire or his need -- or he won't honestly admit to it himself without being led into it by your ad -- or the need is so general and amorphous that it resists being summed up in a single headline -- or it's a secret that just cannot be verbalized.

This is the outer reaches of the awareness scale. Stage five ads are the most difficult to create. Planning a headline for the completely unaware or resistant market is a process of elimination -- here are things to consider:

- 1 -- price means nothing.
- 2 -- the name of your product means nothing.
- 3 -- a direct statement of what your product does, desire it satisfies, or what problem it solves will not work.

The stage five problem the market is unaware, uninterested, and unsophisticated. You cannot mention price, product, function or desire. What you have left is the market itself!

With stage five ads you simply create an identification headline. You are essentially calling your market together in the headline of your ad. You're selling nothing, promising nothing, satisfy nothing. Instead, you're echoing an emotion, an attitude, a dissatisfaction that takes people out from the crowd, and binds them together in a single statement.

It's NOT easy, but then again... Nothing worthwhile ever is :)

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* Synthesized from *BREAKTHROUGH ADVERTISING [BA]* by E. Schwartz.