

Jennifer Klitzke

Sandra Smith

Mktg 340: Advertising Practices and Procedures

Written Assignment -- Advertiser

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Not just for Ken[any]more – Barbie likes it too

In analyzing an advertisement for Kenmore Elite dishwashers that was placed in Good Housekeeping magazine, the following analysis has been made about demographics, target market, company and product history, product features and benefits, unique positioning statement, the competition and the effectiveness of the advertisement.

Although the Kenmore brand has historically attracted a male demographic, the Kenmore Elite dishwasher advertisement, featured in Good Housekeeping, clearly targets a female demographic. The main visual is eye catching, humorous, and memorable: Barbie and her friends are really living! Now that the Kenmore Elite dishwasher does the dishes so well, the kitchen sink has been repurposed. Barbie hosts a bubble bath party--in the kitchen sink. They share stories about last night's pasta party, while the baked-on lasagna dishes are "turbo" cleaned by the 24 powerful rotating spray jets of the Kenmore Elite dishwasher. "Ha!" Barbie raises her relaxing refreshment and replies, "Doing the dishes has never been so easy! Now that's 'Life Running Beautifully'." It's a perfect advertisement that creatively depicts the Kenmore Elite tagline, product features, and benefits to the target market.

The copy writing is picturesque and illustrates common, tough-to-clean dish messes that are simply resolved by the unique product features (rotating jets and pressurized spray nozzles).

The copy leads you to the Kenmore.com Web site that provides an interactive demonstration. This is a unique collaboration of promotional media -- provided that high-speed internet access is available. However, the interactive Web site lacks a direct tie-in to the print advertisement. While it is technically advanced, it lacks creativity and is rather generic and dry.

The Kenmore Elite brand is sold exclusively at Sears and targets the “value” to upper midtier segments according to Tina Settecase, vice president and general manager of home appliances at Sears; this captures a household income of up to \$75,000 (Rudnick). This segment also aligns well with the Good Housekeeping female demographic of value-conscious homemakers.

Sears and Kenmore: 1886-2008

The early roots of Sears began in 1886 when Richard W. Sears purchased a shipment of watches and founded the R.W. Sears Watch Co. Five years later, Sears repositioned his focus and founded Sears, Roebuck and Co., a mail order company. Today, 116 years later, Sears employs 247,000 employees with annual sales of \$30,030.000M (Sears, Roebuck and Co).

However, today’s soft economy is hard on retailers. Even Sears with a 116-year legacy is not immune. Sears sluggish sales and slipping revenue (from 76.2 billion to 15.1 billion over the last year), has the Company reimagining themselves as they launch a new campaign “reimagining you” (Facenda). This campaign tagline supports well the image of Kenmore Elite.

Even during a soft economy, Sears continues to spend media dollars. Of the \$493 million spent on U.S. media, Sears spent \$125.8 million in television commercials. Sears also “uses partnerships, interactive, and seasonal campaigns to drive the media mix” (Faenda).

Kenmore is among the leading brands carried “exclusively” by Sears. Since its introduction in 1927, Kenmore has grown to be the leading brand in the dishwasher industry. Its “market share is extraordinary -- 50 percent higher than its closest competitor” (kenmore.com).

The leading competitors in the dishwasher market are Whirlpool (who manufactures Kenmore for Sears), General Electric (GE) Appliances, and Maytag. Whirlpool is the number one manufacturer of dishwashers within the United States and second in the world. Kenmore holds the leading market share of 26 percent, while GE and Maytag are even with 17 percent each (Household Appliances). For years, Maytag has remained unchanged in its branding. Maytag is now on its second generation of Maytag repairmen who are known for repairing everything but a Maytag, because the product never breaks down.

In addition to convenience and energy efficiency, consumers are interested in the visual aesthetics in the kitchen. The Kenmore Elite captures all of these benefits in a stylish and attractive appliance (PRNewswire). It’s no wonder that Barbie chose the kitchen to host her bubble bath party.

Ahhh, no more “dried on oatmeal or lipstick on wine glasses” (Kenmore). Those who do dishes by hand know firsthand the struggle to get dishes clean; those who have poorly performing dishwashers know what “clean” dirty dishes look like. The Kenmore Elite is effective and convenient – no more prescrubbing hassles. It lets Barbie experience her “life running beautifully”. Just ask Barbie and her friends; they agree that this is what makes the Kenmore Elite dishwasher an industry leader.

And what makes Barbie love Ken[even]more.

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