



GREAT Advertising Quotations

A Collection Of Thoughts
On The Business Of
Attracting Customers

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Compiled by Robert Boduch



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Advertising is...

“If commerce is the engine of our economy, then advertising is the spark. Responsible advertisers are the drivers who keep us on the right track, leading to a richer, more benevolent society.”

Brian Philcox

“Advertising is the lubricant for the free-enterprise system.”

Leo Arthur Kelmenson

“Advertising is, actually, a simple phenomenon in terms of economics. It is merely a substitute for a personal sales force - an extension, if you will, of the merchant who cries aloud his wares.”

Rosser Reeves

“Advertising is the foot on the accelerator, the hand on the throttle, the spur on the flank that keeps our economy surging forward.”

Robert W. Sarnoff

“The faults of advertising are only those common to all human institutions. If advertising speaks to a thousand in order to influence one, so does the church. And if it encourages people to live beyond their means, so does matrimony. Good times, bad times, there will always be advertising. In good times, people want to advertise; in bad times they have to.”

Bruce Barton

“Let’s get right down to the heart of the matter. The power, the force, the overwhelming urge to own that makes advertising work, comes from the market itself, and not from the copy. Copy cannot create desire for a product. It can only take the hopes, dreams, fears and desires that already exist in the hearts of millions of people, and focus those already existing desires on to a particular product. This is the copywriter’s task: Not to create this mass desire – but to channel and direct it.”

Eugene Schwartz

“Your object in all advertising is to buy new customers at a price which pays a profit.”

Claude Hopkins

“Writing copy is like playing the stock market, or being an atomic physicist. All three deal with immense natural forces – gargantuan forces thousands of times more powerful than the people who use them. In science, they are the fundamental energies of the universe. In speculation, they are the billion-dollar tides and currents of the marketplace. In copy-writing, they are the HOPES and FEARS and DESIRES of millions upon millions of men and women, all over the world.”

Eugene Schwartz

Your offer can make a hero or a bum out of the finest, slickest string of words you ever turned out.”

Maxwell Sackheim

“Many a small thing has been made large by the right kind of advertising.”

Mark Twain

“As a profession advertising is young; as a force it is as old as the world. The first four words ever uttered, ‘Let there be light,’ constitute its charter. All nature is vibrant with its impulse.”

Bruce Barton

“There is a huge difference between journalism and advertising. Journalism aspires to truth. Advertising is regulated for truth. I’ll put the accuracy of the average ad in this country up against the average news story any time.”

Jef I. Richards

“Asked about the power of advertising in research surveys, most agree that it works, but not on them.”

Eric Clark

“Advertising is selling Twinkies to adults.”

Donald R. Vance

“There are a lot of great technicians in advertising. And unfortunately they talk the best game. They know all the rules ... but there’s one little rub. They forget that advertising is persuasion, and persuasion is not a science, but an art. Advertising is the art of persuasion.”

William Bernbach

“Every word, sentence, and headline should have one specific purpose – to lead your potential customer to your order page.”

Shelley Lowery

“If language is not correct, then what is said is not what is meant; if what is said is not what is meant, than what ought to be done remains undone.”

Confucius

“You can’t expect them to read your story unless it’s more important than whatever it is they are doing or thinking about at the moment.”

Maxwell Sackheim

“Aiming your letter well, at the right people, will have more impact on your results than any amount of fine language.”

Drayton Bird

“Make it simple. Make it memorable. Make it inviting to look at. Make it fun to read.”

Leo Burnett

“There are certain prime human emotions with which the thoughts of all of us are occupied a goodly part of the time. Tune in on them, and you have your reader’s attention. Tie it up to the thing you have to offer and you are sure of his interest.”

Robert Collier

“Advertising is the ability to sense, interpret... to put the very heart throbs of a business into type, paper and ink.”

Leo Burnett

“Next to Christianity, advertising is the greatest force in the world. And I say that without sacrilege or disrespect. Advertising makes people discontented. It makes them want things they don’t have. Without discontent, there is no progress, no achievement.”

Morris Hite

“The product that will not sell without advertising will not sell profitably with advertising.”

Albert Lasker

“Advertising: the science of arresting the human intelligence long enough to get money from it.”

Stephen B. Leacock

“A good advertising man is a first-class pragmatist. If he has any basic theorem at all, it is that most advertising is an intrusion upon the time and attention of people; a justifiable one but an intrusion nonetheless. The reader has bought the magazine for something other than the ads. Therefore the copywriters undertake to stop him in spite of himself.”

Albert Lynd

“The best looking merchandise won’t sell without the intelligent persuasion of somebody’s words.”

Elmer Wheeler

“Advertising says to people, ‘Here’s what we’ve got. Here’s what it will do for you. Here’s how to get it.’”

Leo Burnett

“A good advertisement is one which sells the product without drawing attention to itself.”

David Ogilvy

“Salesmanship is the art and science of serving the needs of a market by helping them overcome their natural resistance to purchasing something that is ultimately to their advantage and far more valuable to them than the money they exchange for it.”

Carl Galletti

“A good ad should be like a good sermon: It must not only comfort the afflicted, it also must afflict the comfortable.”

Bernice Fitz-Gibbon

“It may be said of men in general that they are ungrateful and fickle, dissemblers, avoiders of danger, and greedy of gain. So long as you shower benefits upon them, they are all yours.”

Niccolo Machiavelli

“When it comes to writing copy, far too much attention is paid to the actual writing and far too little is paid to ferreting out facts about which the copywriter is trying to sell.”

Gary Halbert

“Advertising is salesmanship in print. Its principles are the principles of salesmanship... The only purpose of advertising is to make sales.”

Claude Hopkins

“Remove advertising, disable a person or firm from proclaiming its wares and their merits, and the whole of society and of the economy is transformed. The enemies of advertising are the enemies of freedom.”

David Ogilvy

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Carl Galletti

“Advertising is of the very essence of democracy. An election goes on every minute of the business day across the counters of hundreds of thousands of stores and shops where the customers state their preferences and determine which manufacturer and which product shall be the leader today, and which shall lead tomorrow.”

Bruce Barton

“It is the deal... the offer... the proposition you are making that is the heart and soul of great copywriting.”

Gary Halbert

“The philosophy behind much advertising is based on the old observation that every man is really two men - the man he is and the man he wants to be.”

William Feather

“The truth isn’t the truth until people believe you, and they can’t believe you if they don’t know what you’re saying, and they can’t know what you’re saying if they don’t listen to you, and they won’t listen to you if you’re not interesting, and you won’t be interesting unless you say things imaginatively, originally, freshly.”

William Bernbach

“If it’s not done ethically, advertising won’t be trusted. If consumers don’t trust it, advertising is pointless.”

Jef I. Richards

“The secret of all effective originality in advertising is not the creation of new and tricky words and pictures, but one of putting familiar words and pictures into new relationships.”

Leo Burnett

“You can say the right thing about a product and nobody will listen. You’ve got to say it in such a way that people will feel it in their gut. Because if they don’t feel it, nothing will happen.”

William Bernbach

“The business that considers itself immune to the necessity of advertising, sooner or later finds itself immune to business.”

Derby Brown

“Many a small thing has been made large by the right kind of advertising.”

Mark Twain

“Advertising is actually a simple phenomenon in terms of economics. It is merely a substitute for a personal sales force — an extension, if you will, of the merchant who cries aloud about his wares.”

Rosser Reeves

“Advertising nourishes the consuming power of men. It sets up before a man a goal of a better home, better clothing, better food for himself and his family. It spurs individual exertion and greater production.”

Winston Churchill

“Promise, large promise, is the soul of an advertisement.”

Samuel Johnson

“It takes a big idea to attract the attention of consumers and get them to buy your product. Unless your advertising contains a big idea, it will pass like a ship in the night. I doubt if more than one campaign in a hundred contains a big idea.”

David Ogilvy

“In writing advertising it must always be kept in mind that the customer often knows more about the goods than the advertising writers because they have had experience in buying them, and any seeming deception in a statement is costly, not only in the expense of the advertising but in the detrimental effect produced upon the customer, who believes she has been misled.”

John Wanamaker

“You can say the right thing about a product and nobody will listen. You’ve got to say it in such a way that people will feel it in their gut. Because if they don’t feel it, nothing will happen.”

William Bernbach

“Yes, I sell people things they don’t need. I can’t, however, sell them something they don’t want. Even with advertising. Even if I were of a mind to.”

John O’Toole

“Advertising is criticized on the ground that it can manipulate consumers to follow the will of the advertiser. The weight of evidence denies this ability. Instead, evidence supports the position that advertising, to be successful, must understand or anticipate basic human needs and wants and interpret available goods and services in terms of their want-satisfying abilities. This is the very opposite of manipulation.”

Charles H. Sandage

“I believe in advertising all the time. There is no such thing as getting a business so established that it does not need to advertise. Babies who never heard about you are being born every day, and people who once knew you forget you if you don’t keep them reminded constantly. Dull times are the very times when you need advertising most.”

William Wrigley, Jr.

“When someone stops advertising, someone stops buying. When someone stops buying, someone stops selling. When someone stops selling, someone stops making. When someone stops making, someone stops earning. When someone stops earning, someone stops buying.”

Edwin H. Stuart

Brilliant Advertising Concepts

“When executing advertising, it’s best to think of yourself as an uninvited guest in the living room of a prospect who has the magical power to make you disappear instantly.”

John O’Toole

“The first thing one must do to succeed in advertising is to have the attention of the reader. That means to be interesting. The next thing is to stick to the truth, and that means rectifying whatever’s wrong in the merchant’s business. If the truth isn’t tellable, fix it so it is. That is about all there is to it.”

John E. Powers

“Our job is to sell our clients’ merchandise ... not ourselves. Our job is to kill the cleverness that makes us shine instead of the product. Our job is to simplify, to tear away the unrelated, to pluck out the weeds that are smothering the product message.”

William Bernbach

“Advertising practitioners are interpreters. But unlike foreign language interpreters, ad people must constantly learn new languages. They must understand the language of each new product, and speak the language of each new target audience.”

Jef I. Richards
