

Television and the new media

In the 1950s **television** arrived and developed quickly into an **advertising medium**. Now advertisers could demonstrate the use of their products which were often presented and promoted by well-known people – the authority, glamour, character or special knowledge of a celebrity could reflect on the advertised product. The 1960s saw advertising transformed into a more scientific approach in which unexpected messages made ads more and more **tempting**. As **cable** and satellite television became increasingly **widespread**, entire channels were devoted to advertising **merchandise**.

Modernity saw the arrival of the big international brands in most markets – the arrival of new ways of shopping and eating. New forms of entertainment also arrived **in the guise** of Disneyland (which opened in California in 1955), Hollywood films and the beginning of the Nouvelle Vague and Italian cinema. Advertising in the **cinema** started to use sophisticated techniques increasingly. In 1957, Roland Barthes applied **semiotics** to the world of **consumption**.

The **Internet** opened new frontiers for advertisers and led to the **dotcom boom** of the 1990s. The portion of online advertising will

increase significantly over time as more devices, such as mobile telephones and televisions, are connected to the Internet and people spend more time on these **devices**.

Businesses began to move their advertising efforts into these areas by making **wide** use of social media from 2009. One major benefit of digital advertising is the immediate publishing of information and content that is not limited by geography or time.

To that end, the emerging area of **interactive advertising** presents fresh challenges for advertisers.

anchorage: ancoraggio, interruttore emotivo

cable: via cavo

dotcom (.com) boom: espansione vertiginosa di indirizzi Internet gestiti da organizzazioni commerciali

to increase: aumentare

in the guise: sotto forma

merchandise: merci

semiotics: semiotica (scienza dei segni linguistici e non linguistici)

tempting: seducente


to that end: a tal fine

wide: ampio

widespread: diffuso

ROLAND BARTHES AND ADVERTISING

Roland Barthes was a French literary philosopher. He was influenced by the writings of Ferdinand de Saussure and his study of signs and signification. His work made important advances in the areas of semiotics, anthropology and post-structuralism. He also wrote on popular phenomena and advertising. Barthes introduced the idea of **anchorage**, which provides the link between the image and its **context**, along with the idea of **relay**, which is a reciprocal **relation** between text and picture: each contributes its own part of the overall **message**. When you see an advertisement, you get a certain kind of meaning from the image, within the overall context that the advertisement provides. It may seem as though the image was “made for” that particular advertisement. However, a moment’s thought will make you realize that, to a certain extent, any image can have any meaning. The text of an advertisement is primarily the extra information that guides the reader to a particular **interpretation** of the whole, and therefore a particular interpretation of the image which is the one aimed at by the advertiser.

1  Decide if the following sentences are true or false. Then correct the false ones.

- | | T | F |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Famous people didn’t appear in TV ads in the ‘50s. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. There are channels totally devoted to selling on satellite T.V. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Advertising techniques became simpler and simpler. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. The dotcom boom started after the year 2000. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. In the future, interactive advertising will become very popular. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |