

COSMETICS

Advertising research

FIPP 2014

What makes the best cosmetics ads the best?



I orientating level

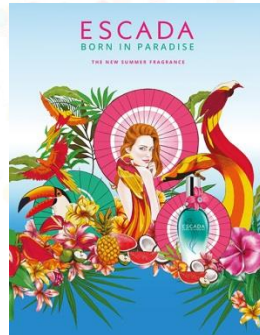
II narrative level

III mythical level

IV suitability

- What actually impacts the reader in the content or the appearance of an advertisement?
- FIPP wanted to find out what makes the reader stop at an ad, be pleased with it and remember it.
- We well know the attention values and reading values of ads, but we don't really know why exactly these ads get such good values.
- A new kind of semiotic-qualitative research found out the secret of the best cosmetics ads in magazines in Finland.

What makes the best cosmetics ads the best?



I orientating level

II narrative level

III mythical level

IV suitability

A. Depth interviews among consumers:

- 15 depth interviews lasting 1-1,5 hours
- Ethnographic method: readers flick through the magazines and comment freely their feelings, opinions, reactions
- The magazines were filled with ads that already had got very good reading and attention values (and some not so good, for comparison)
- The following women's magazines were used (September 2014): Anna, Cosmopolitan, Costume, Eeva, Elle, ET-lehti, Gloria, Kauneus & Terveys, Kotiliesi, Me Naiset, Trendi

B. Semiotic analysis of the ads:

- “ The ads were analysed semiotically
- “ What kind of colors, forms and visual compositions are attractive in cosmetics and why?
- “ What kind of stories appeal to the readers in ads?
- “ What kind of mythical material is effective in cosmetics ads?

A. Depth interviews



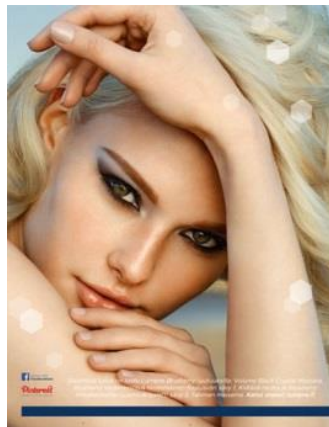
Valores Consult
www.semiotiikka.com

Women 20-65 years

- Student 20 years
- Student 20
- Student 21
- BBA 25
- Physical education instructor 26
- Physiotherapist 30
- Nurse 33
- Marketing assistant 34
- Project manager 37
- Vocational student 38
- Bachelor of Social services 42
- Kindergartner 43
- Specialist 46
- Engineer 46
- Bookkeeper 48
- Teacher 50
- Music instructor 56
- Special education teacher 57
- Pensioner 64
- Pensioner 65

AIKAKAUSMEDIA

60 ads that already got good reading and attention values in tests



Make-up
Cream, serum
Perfume
Hair care
Shower products

Aspects of noticing and reading ads



"Bloody cool, they got the nerve to put different colours, all brown-eyed and so pretty..."



"I like it much that they show different kinds of beautiful women, not just one ideal type"

"Beautiful, really stylish, I stop and watch"

"Wonder why she's biting her lip?"

Valores Consult
www.semiotikka.com

1a. Scanning according to the model and implementation: "is this beautiful enough?"

Beautiful model and implementation

- Is she stunningly good-looking for me to watch?
 - Is she charismatic enough?
 - Aesthetics first
- ⇒ **Good-looking, especially differently good-looking ad is looked at no matter what are thoughts of the brand**



AIKAKAUSMEDIA

Aspects of noticing and reading ads



"Lumene always has beautiful, yet somehow natural-looking models"

1b. Scanning according to the model

"is she charming enough?"

The model should be charming enough also for those who appreciate natural beauty

- Model looks like she's without make-up or with just a little made-up
- Not too much photoshoping
- Some products benefit of a natural-looking model, however not too bland
- Personality is recognized when there's not too much photoshop used



"Well this just basic... The model is not THAT beautiful after all.. They probably like to stick to facts..."

"Dove has always been nice in that they show just ordinary beautiful women"



AIKAKAUSMEDIA

Aspects of noticing and reading ads



"This is for very young, I've passed this (age) already"
– Woman 26 years

"Here's something for my age, too"
– Woman 56 years



Valores Consult
www.semiotiikka.com

1c. Scanning according to the model

"is she my age/type or not?"

People follow products for their age based on the models in ads

- If the model presents "wrong age" readers don't necessarily stop at the ad
- In ads about wrinkle creams readers accept a bit younger models, but some readers complain about this

When the model's style is very different from the reader's own style, this can make the reader miss the ad

- A natural reader is not very interested in heavy make-up
- A youthful reader is not so interested in a very ladylike model etc.

Aspects of noticing and reading ads



"If Lumene were more expensive, I might buy it easier ... who knows, it might be just as good as the more expensive ones"
– Woman 34 years

"You get such a luxurious feeling, when you have such nice bottle and wonderful smell in the cream.. (for that) you are ready to pay...
– Woman 37 years

"I don't so trust these cheaper brands' quality....."
– Woman 56 years

"If they had the price, you could be surprised that it isn't THAT expensive... if it were 60-70 euros, I could well buy this wrinkle product"
– Woman 65 years

1d. Scanning according to the price of the brand "is this my level or not"

Interest and trust for cosmetics brands depends on the price level, too:

- The reader does not seriously look at a brand too expensive or too cheap for her

Readers would like to see the price also to be able to define the quality of the brand

- "Suitably expensive" arouses many readers' trust for the brand quality
- There are rational readers, too, who are looking for something "cheap and good"

Aspects of noticing and reading ads



"I'm excited about these BB-creams now, though I don't usually use make-up foundation... And the situation in the ad is familiar, too"

"I don't use mascara. For I have false eye-lashes, so for me it's all the same what they have in these ads"

Valores Consult
www.semiotiikka.com

1e. Scanning according to the product

"do I use these, are they for me"

Brands I use:

My brand, I always look at their ads

New products/ brands, that interest me:

BB- ja CC-creams, serums, that are relatively new in the market => **Need to be repeated, so that people get interested in trying them**

Products I don't use

If you don't use these kinds of products at all, you rarely stop to read the ad, either

"I have a longer project here to learn to use a fluid eyeliner..."

"Too expensive make-up for me, so I wouldn't stop at them."

"I use Lumene a lot, so I always check their ads, if there's something new."

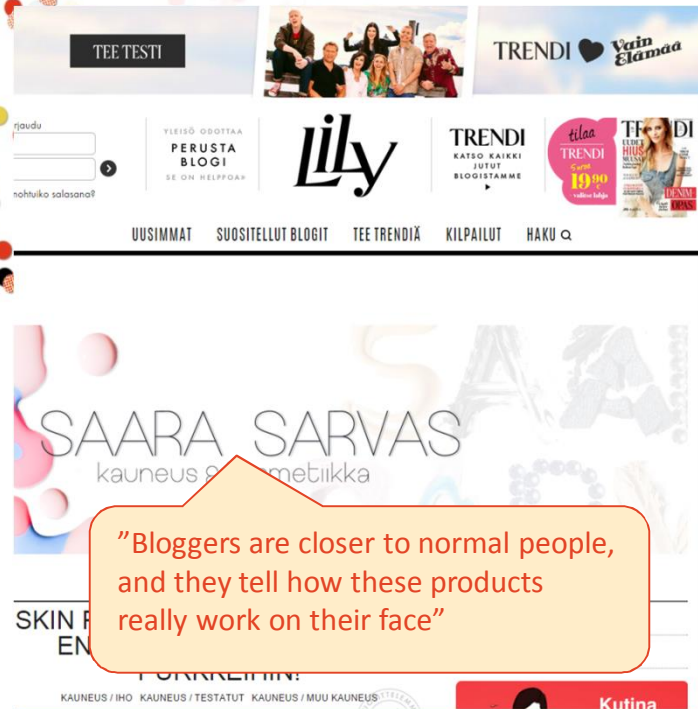
AIKAKAUSMEDIA

Beauty in internet

A. DEPTH INTERVIEWS

2a. Beauty in internet

- Blogs bring products and brands closer to the consumer
- Blogs give ideas and tips to use
- New trends are first seen at bloggers
- Curiosity makes to follow bloggers
- Young read online magazines, for they are free, that way they get to know blogs, too
- Practical make-up tips with pics or video are most popular content
- Make-up artists and dermatologists with 'name' are the best authorities – after readers' own friends
- Product placement and promoting products in blogs is recognized – people well know bloggers get products for promoting them
- Facebook is a channel that makes even middle-aged people sometimes to click on some brand's campaign

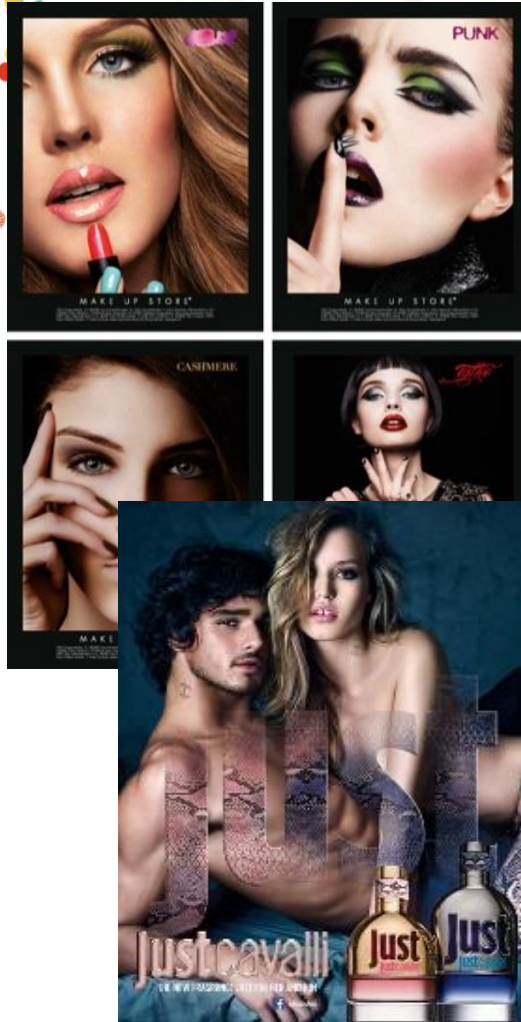


"Bloggers are closer to normal people, and they tell how these products really work on their face"

"You get inspired of these different guys, it's fun to follow it when someone has a nice style... and then the story continues again, it's different"

"Often I just look at the pictures in a blog, but yes it's fun to browse them every once in a while"

A good cosmetics ad



Valores Consult
www.semiotiikka.com

A good cosmetics ad according to consumers

1. Beautiful model in close-up
2. Stunning
3. Strong feeling
4. Product well demonstrated
5. Offers a sample
6. Not too exaggerated
7. Age shown in a nice way
8. Clear and aesthetic
9. Not too rational
10. Looks like the brand

A. DEPTH INTERVIEWS



AIKAKAUSMEDIA

A good cosmetics ad



75%

"This is perfect. Such a beautiful woman in an interesting way, the lips stand out really well."

Huomio-
arvo

72%

Valores Consult
www.semiotikka.com

1. Beautiful model in close-up

- ⇒ Extraordinarily beautiful face always stops, when well photographed
- ⇒ Face = Beauty
- ⇒ Model's look at the reader takes contact
- ⇒ Facial expression tells the story of the product and brand



73%

"Beautiful and clean, a good model for that product."

"This is just great, you have three different, beautiful women, you stop to watch them... princess sisters..."



AIKAKAUSMEDIA

A good cosmetics ad



"The bottle pops up like some diamond... Like a fairytale.."

"Well this hair is gorgeous. And mystical colours with glossy paper, very good."

2. Stunning

- ⇒ Luxury is expected from cosmetics
- ⇒ Cosmetics = Fairytale
- ⇒ Magnificent, stunning visuals, glossy paper is a bonus
- ⇒ Differentiating (from other content and other ads)



A good cosmetics ad



"Have to admit these are dramatic, and make me look, even though I never use that much make-up myself."

"These words aren't necessary – 'Punk' and 'Tattoo' – the pictures tell it already."

Valores Consult
www.semiotiikka.com

3. Strong feeling

- ⇒ An ad with a suspending atmosphere arouses desire and stays in the memory
- ⇒ Sensuality
- ⇒ The product and brand spirit is communicated with the visuals
- ⇒ Cosmetics is being bought much for aesthetic reasons, too
- ⇒ The outlook of an ad and package has a great significance



A. DEPTH INTERVIEWS



"...Sweet breeze and luxurious feeling..."

"Excellent! ... just excellent."

AIKAKAUSMEDIA

A good cosmetics ad



75%

"Lips are in the focus and stand out well. Lipstick is in her hand so that you notice it, presented in a nice way."

"Here they show how fine make-up you get with these products. But there are too many products here or they don't come out well as they are put in a mixed bunch. Also the yellow background disturbs me a bit."

4. Product well demonstrated

- ⇒ Shows why the product is good
- ⇒ Brand name and package big enough in the picture
- ⇒ Shows how the product works
- ⇒ For whom, for which purpose
- ⇒ How to use
- ⇒ The price would be nice to know, too

A. DEPTH INTERVIEWS



76%

"You can see the beard is not pinching when you use Nivea. A cliché, but it works."

70%



Valores Consult
www.semiotikka.com

AIKAKAUSMEDIA

A good cosmetics ad

5. Offers a sample.

- ⇒ Samples are appreciated and used
- ⇒ It would be nice to test creams and perfumes at home in peace
- ⇒ Chance to test in real life how the product works for me
- ⇒ A concrete allergy test
- ⇒ Even a more expensive product can easily find a buyer, when one could try it and find it good.

"I always take the samples. Then I try them in peace. I don't buy an expensive cream without trying it first. And it's much nicer to try at home than in shops."

"You see the brand trusts itself, when they can allow you to try a sample."

Valores Consult
www.semiotiikka.com

"I appreciate samples. Wouldn't necessarily try a new thing, but when it's there and you try, you might find something good. I just found a good BB-cream from a sample."

"I collect samples and take them to travels. It's handy, you don't have to carry all the bottles."

"A perfume is difficult to judge on a shop. I smell two or three and I'm all mixed-up already."

AIKAKAUSMEDIA

A good cosmetics ad



89%

"Exploding density, oh my. And false lashes in the photo – I don't like this that they put false lashes in a mascara ad, I think it's cheating."

"For me this is a bit too much... exaggerated words and golden drops... It looks a bit overtrying..."

Valores Consult
www.semiotiikka.com

6. Not too exaggerated

- ⇒ No false lashes in mascara ads
- ⇒ Not overly exaggerated text
- ⇒ Not unbelievable 'research results'
- ⇒ They irritate readers
- ⇒ A calm, believable argument is the best
- ⇒ Visually imposing, but not extravagant



82%

"False lashes in a mascara ad are too much for me. I can't trust such brands."

AIKAKAUSMEDIA

A good cosmetics ad



"I would pass by this, cause I'm not that age anymore."
– Woman 26 years old

"They say 50 is new 40, but that lady looks like over 60 - I'm not that old yet!"
– Woman 57 years



"Here's the same actor looking like 50 years old, this is nice, this I accept."
– Woman 57 years



82%

7. Age shown in a nice way.

- ⇒ A completely wrinkleless '60-year old' is not credible
- ⇒ Ads for teenagers should have teenager-looking models
- ⇒ Wrinkle cream ads should be especially careful at showing age in a suitable way, not too young, not too realistic, either
- ⇒ A perfect photoshopped doll face might frustrate younger readers, too
- ⇒ A little polishing is always accepted

A good cosmetics ad



76%

"Even though it's just a container, but it's so beautiful and pleasant to hold in your hand..."

"This looks so fresh and clear, nice to watch"

Valores Consult
www.semioitiikka.com

8. Clear and aesthetic

- ⇒ Stylish implementation
- ⇒ A quality photo
- ⇒ Clear, simple enough
- ⇒ Not too many elements or arguments
- ⇒ Beautiful to look at, whatever it is



Valores Consult
www.semioitiikka.com

A. DEPTH INTERVIEWS

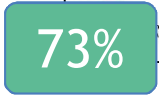


83%

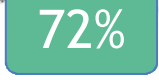
"This is done with quality and style, I would take it and save."

75%

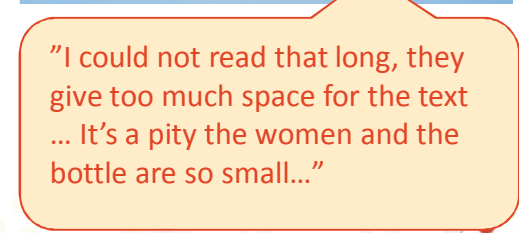
AIKAKAUSMEDIA



"Here they have so much text that I wouldn't read, unless it were a major problem for me."



A. DEPTH INTERVIEWS



AIKAKAUSMEDIA

A good cosmetics ad



71%

"Looks just like a pharmacy product, they show just the bottles, factual and assuring."

"This looks so like Lumene, a blond Scandinavian woman, sensitive, too, and the whole ad is light and clear and of course there's some berry, too."

Valores Consult
www.semiotiikka.com

10. Brand-looking

- ⇒ Ad looking like the brand is a benefit
- ⇒ Strengthens the brand image, helps recognizing and reminds what all this was about
- ⇒ Cosmetics advertising in general looks more or less the same, so it pays off to be systematic in differentiation



77%

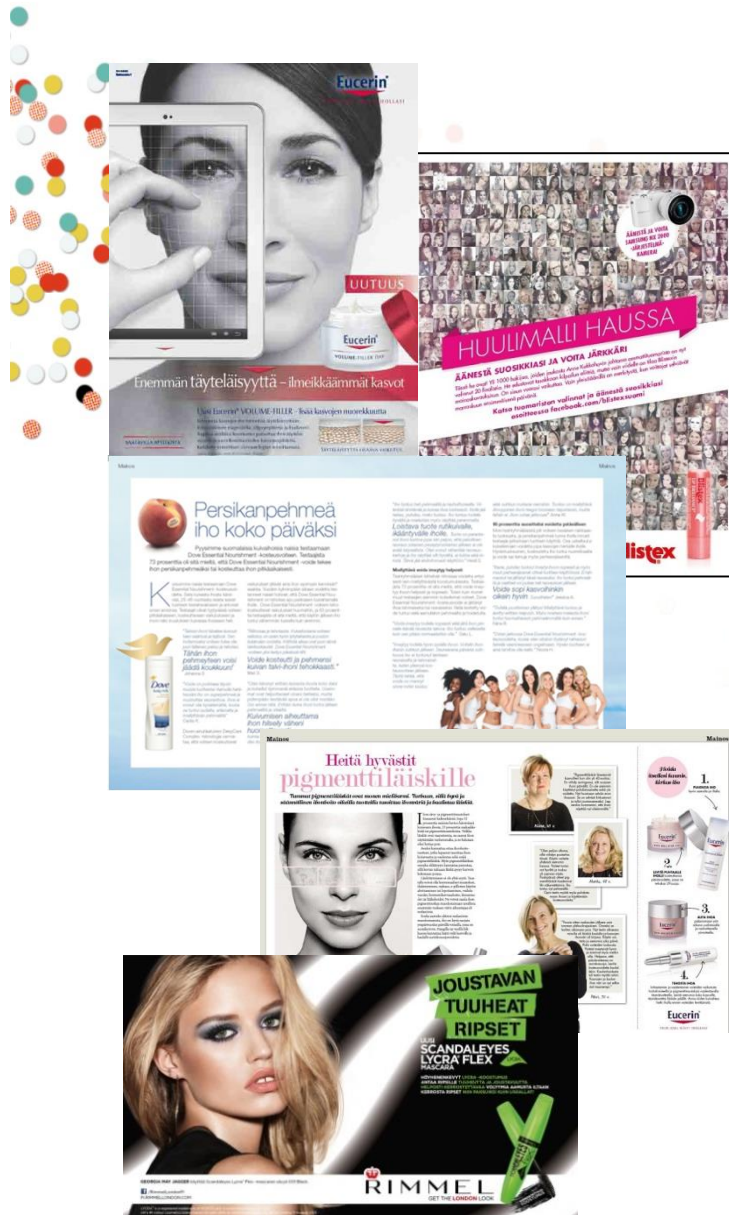
A. DEPTH INTERVIEWS



"All hair dye ads are the same, they look like their packages, easy to recognize."

"A strong brand doesn't need anything else than a face and the product."

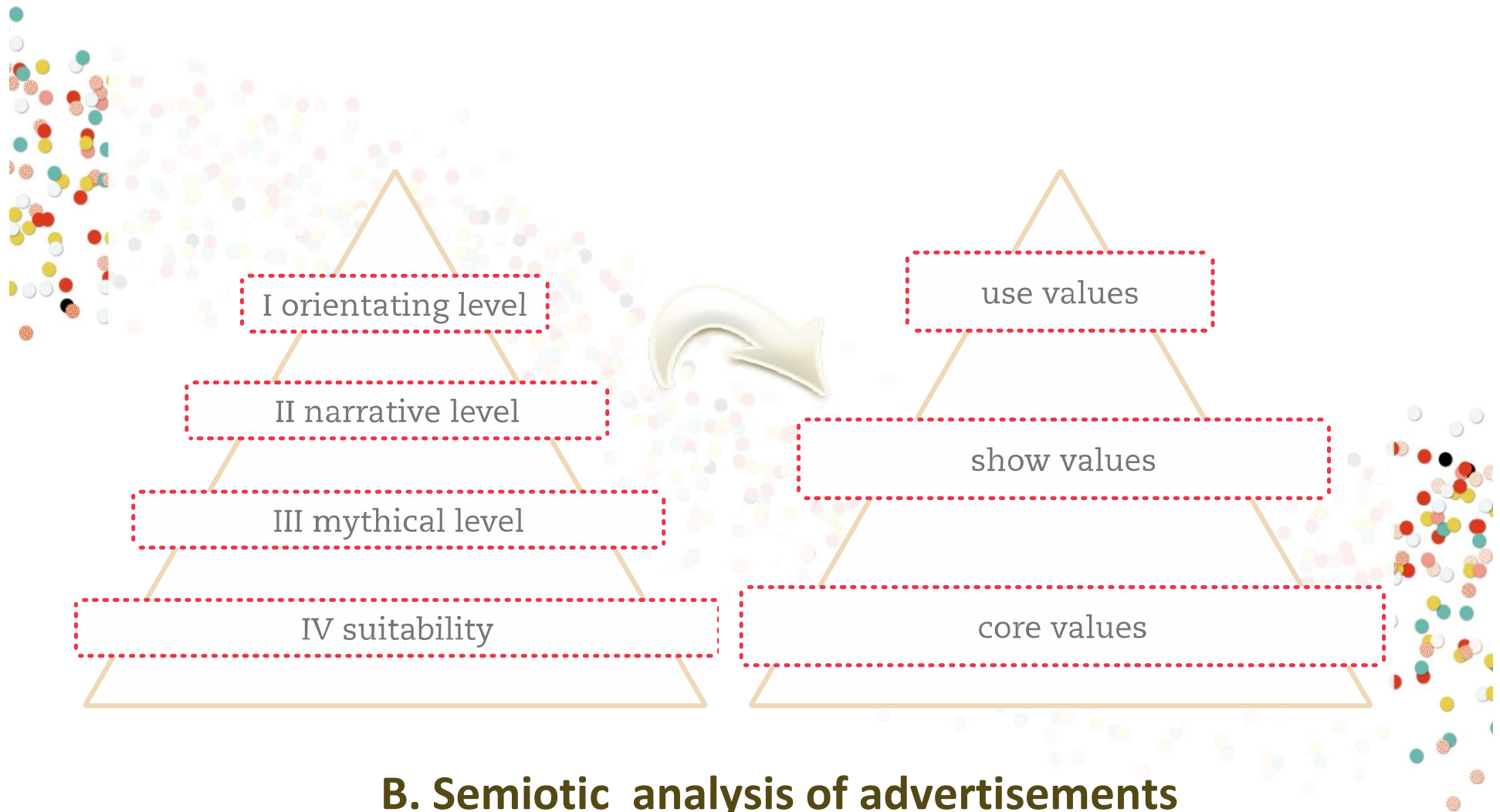
AIKAKAUSMEDIA



Valores Consult
www.semiotikka.com

A not so good cosmetics ad

1. Model is too commonplace.
2. Too commonplace in general.
Does not differentiate, carelessly made.
3. No feeling. Bland, neutral.
4. Product does not come out. They forgot to present the product
5. Overly exaggerated. Too much photoshopping. Promises too much, untrue text and pictures. Big false lashes in a mascara ad.
6. Age very unrealistically presented.
7. Scrappy, full of stuff.
8. Too much text, boring.
9. Not suitable for the brand. Weakens the brand image, too old-style.



B. SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS

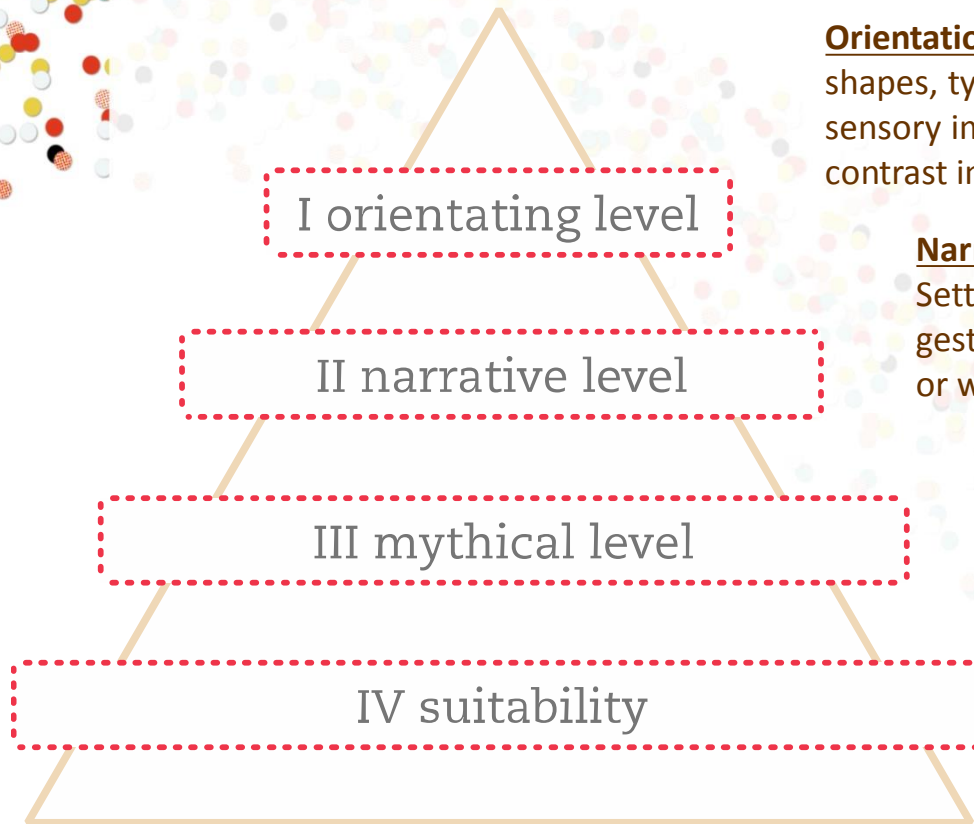
What is semiotic analysis

Orientation level : What colours communicate, shapes, typographies, rhythm, perspective, scale, sensory impressions and the composition: harmony/contrast in the ad.

Narrative level : Everything that tells a story. Setting, characters, heroes, roles, acts, rituals, objects, gestures, reference groups, relations and showing who or what has status.

Mythical level: What makes an inexplicably strong feeling. What we interpret instantly as good or bad, desirable or not desirable. Myths, symbols, archetypes, stereotypes, universal values, good-bad-dichotomies.

Suitability: How well this communication suits this industry, branch, product group or brand.



Semiotic analysis studies especially the hidden structures of communication.

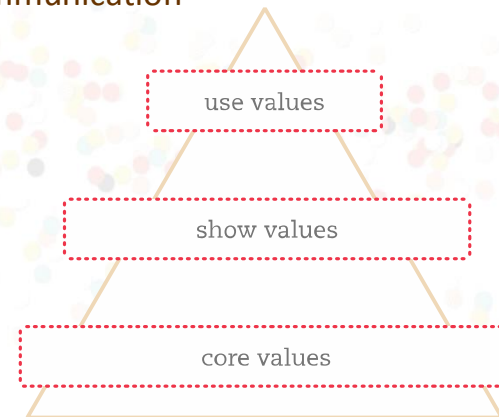
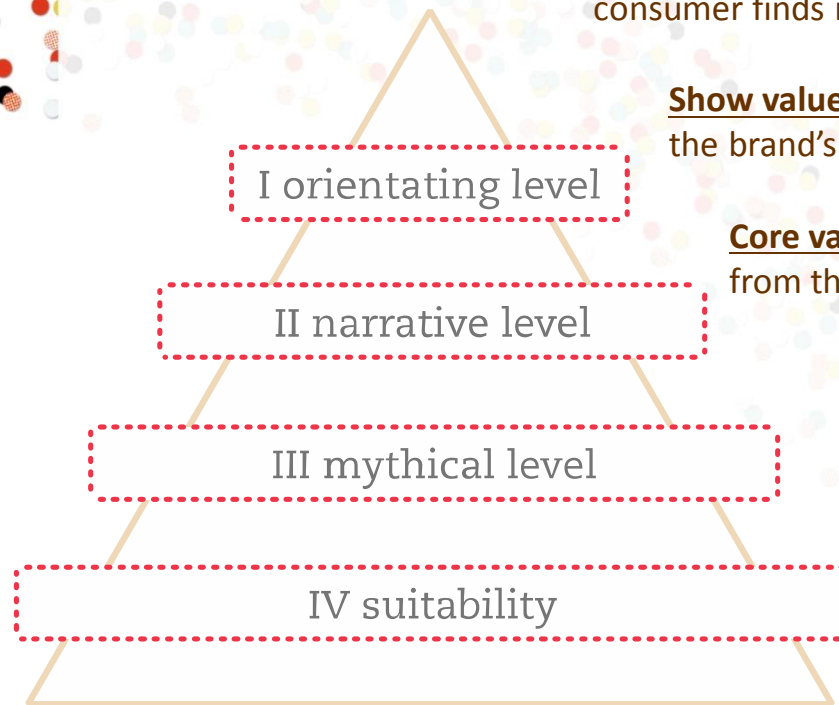
B. SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS

Semiotic analysis examines the values the advertising communicates.

Use values: The rational and practical benefits the consumer finds in the brand's communication

Show values: Emotional values consumer gets from the brand's communication

Core values: Ideological benefits the consumer gets from the brand's communication



Advertising is examined, what kind of values it communicates to the reader. The reader's own culture and background influences how he/she interprets advertising and which values he/she supports. However myths are set in us by culture, so that we take for granted the values the myths offer. On the orientation level i.e. the influence of colours is originally physiological, so we react to colours often the same way. On the discursive level the reader has most 'power' to interpret, and many stories are interpreted in different ways depending on the reader's attitude.

SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF COSMETICS ADS



1. Contrast and dark colours
2. Colourful strong colours
3. Harmony and gentle colours
4. Composition
5. Myth of Perfection
6. The Science Myth
7. Myth of Purity
8. The Natural Myth
9. Women's roles and Female myths:
Drama Queen, Femme Fatale, The Goddess,
Ethereic beauty, Lolita, The Natural Child, Film
star, Nigtbird
10. Rational argumentation
11. Package is the message
12. The brand myths

Messages of cosmetics ads

B. SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS

1. Contrast and dark colours

Black

- ⇒ Drama, confidence
- ⇒ Threat, suspense, night
- ⇒ Art (black background)
- ⇒ Professionalism, know-how
- ⇒ "I am cool, immovable"

Red- black

- ⇒ Extra dramatic
- ⇒ Colours of life and death: blood, night
- ⇒ Colour combination of war and competition
- ⇒ Hard values
- ⇒ Suspense, fear, threat
- ⇒ "I am strong! I can challenge!"



Messages of cosmetics ads

B. SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS



2a. Colourful strong colours

- “ Neon colours: magenta, violet, lime, blue-green
- ⇒ Raise the pulse, stir up hormones
- ⇒ Fastness, sudden, dynamic
- ⇒ Eye-irritating, impact, sudden movements
- ⇒ Arousing attention, boldness
- ⇒ “I! Am! Effective! Energetic!”



Valores Consult
www.semiotiikka.com



AIKAKAUSMEDIA

Messages of cosmetics ads

B. SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS



2b. Colourful, strong colours

" Turquoise

- ⇒ Antiseptic, purifying
- ⇒ Cool, fresh, menthol
- ⇒ Laboratory-like, scientific
- ⇒ Sea (as gentle holiday-surroundings)
- ⇒ "I am clean, fresh and perky"

⇒ Blue-green

- ⇒ Mysterious, having secret knowledge
- ⇒ Mystical
- ⇒ Sea (as an uncontrollable power)
- ⇒ Space
- ⇒ Eternity
- ⇒ "I am clean, sharp and cool"



Messages of cosmetics ads

B. SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS

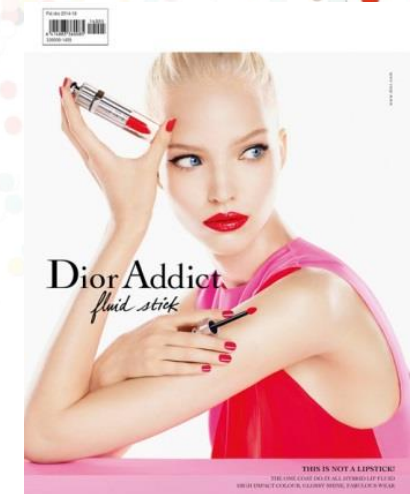
2b. Colourful strong colours

Red

- ⇒ Raise the pulse, stir up adrenaline
- ⇒ Fastness, power, motion
- ⇒ Dynamic, active, spontaneous
- ⇒ Greed for power, challenging
- ⇒ As a bright shade: happy, childish, playful
- ⇒ "I! Am! Here!"

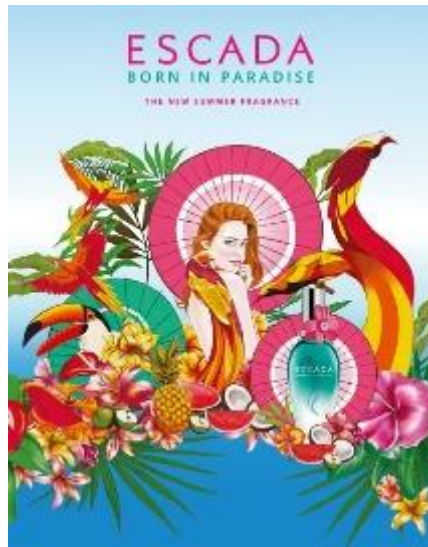
Bright red (lipstick)

- ⇒ Erotic invitation
- ⇒ Wild and free
- ⇒ Speed, adrenaline
- ⇒ Careless, boisterous
- ⇒ "Ready to have fun!"



Messages of cosmetics ads

B. SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS



2c. Colourful strong colours

“ Orange

- ⇒ Raise the pulse, stir up hormones
- ⇒ Fastness, dynamic
- ⇒ Extrovert (look at me!)
- ⇒ Arousing attention, deviance from group
- ⇒ Originality, sense of humour, boldness
- ⇒ Hyper social, glad, energetic
- ⇒ “I want contact! I come to you!”

“ Yellow

- ⇒ Joy, eagerness, liveliness
- ⇒ Happiness, positivity
- ⇒ Warmth, energy
- ⇒ Sun, flowers
- ⇒ “I’m happy and cheerful”

Messages of cosmetics ads



Valores Consult
www.semiotiikka.com

3a. Harmony and gentle colours

Pastel colours

- ⇒ Childhood, innocence
- ⇒ Inexperience
- ⇒ Sensitive, delicate
- ⇒ Mild
- ⇒ Sweet
- ⇒ Clean
- ⇒ "I'm sensitive and innocent"
- ⇒ Candy
- ⇒ Gift wrap
- ⇒ Baby clothes

B. SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS



AIKAKAUSMEDIA

Messages of cosmetics ads



3b. Harmony, gentle colours

Nude

- ⇒ Harmony, peace
- ⇒ Gentle, leaning
- ⇒ Beach

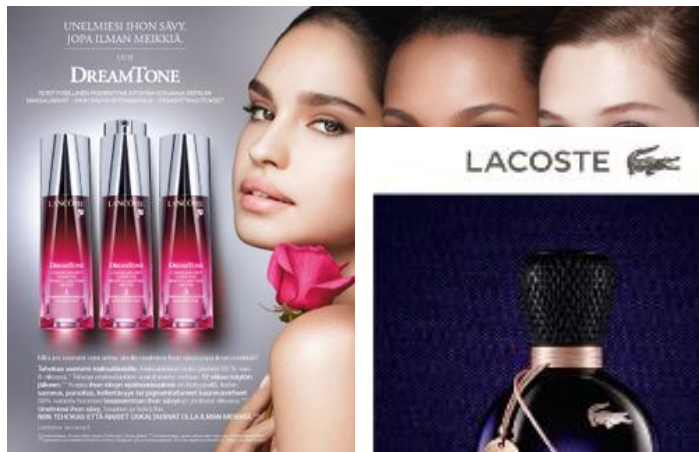
Pink:

- ⇒ Girly, young
- ⇒ Dreamy, gentle
- ⇒ Innocence, protection
- ⇒ Small girl toys
- ⇒ "I am a nice little girl"

B. SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS



Messages of cosmetics ads



Valores Consult
www.semiotiikka.com

B. SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS

3a. Stylish, refined colours

“ Grey, grey-blue

- ⇒ Composed, unnoticeable
- ⇒ Conventional, respecting rules
- ⇒ Modesty
- ⇒ Static, stable, status quo
- ⇒ Age
- ⇒ “I don’t emphasize myself”

“ Dark blue

- ⇒ Uniform colour (police, customs, navy)
- ⇒ Trustworthy, loyal
- ⇒ Firmness, confidence
- ⇒ Conservative, status quo
- ⇒ “You can trust me”

AIKAKAUSMEDIA

Messages of cosmetics ads



B. SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS

3b. Stylish, refined colours

" Gold, jewels

- ⇒ Wealth, money
- ⇒ Materialism
- ⇒ Luxury
- ⇒ Perfection
- ⇒ Status
- ⇒ Above others
- ⇒ Royal
- ⇒ Jewels: princess, bride
- ⇒ "I'm worth it"



Messages of cosmetics ads

B. SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS



Valores Consult
www.semiotiikka.com

3c. Stylish, refined colours

Black

- ⇒ Professionalism, leading position
- ⇒ Dramatic, festive
- ⇒ Secretive, mysterious
- ⇒ Hiding, sorrow
- ⇒ "I have a position"
- ⇒ Or: "I have a secret"

Black-white

- ⇒ Plain, simple
- ⇒ Rational
- ⇒ Contrast, graphic
- ⇒ Strength without shouting
- ⇒ Willpower, certitude, unconditional
- ⇒ "I know what I am, I know what I want"

AIKAKAUSMEDIA

Messages of cosmetics ads



4. Composition

“ Harmonic, static lay-out

- ⇒ Not many elements
- ⇒ Centralized lay-out, balanced
- ⇒ Certain 'emptiness' there = rest, peace
- ⇒ A perfect object: (face, bottle etc)
- ⇒ "Put under the reader's eye"

“ Floating, flushing movement

- ⇒ Diagonal lines (a pose with diagonal lines)
- ⇒ Excitement, tension, motion
- ⇒ Motion made still by a photo is interesting
- ⇒ Living, breathing, interesting

B. SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS



Messages of cosmetics ads

B. SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS

5. Myth of Perfection

- ⇒ "Goddess, Diva, Virgin, Fairy"
- ⇒ Flawless porcelain-skin, impeccable face
- ⇒ Supernatural, shining, with aura
- ⇒ Gold, silver, shine, diamonds
- ⇒ Treasure-like elixir bottles and packages



Messages of cosmetics ads



6. The Science Myth

- ⇒ "the research results prove"
- ⇒ Graphs, curves, co-ordinates, per cents
- ⇒ Laboratory-like bottles and elements
- ⇒ Scientific names of ingredients: hyaluron acid, seramides, no parabeine, LR2412 4%-Cx...
- ⇒ Rational outlook
- ⇒ 'Scientific' fonts

B. SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS



Messages of cosmetics ads



Valores Consult
www.semiotikka.com

B. SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS

7. Myth of Purity

- 
- ⇒ Water, mist, softened
 - ⇒ Transparent packages
 - ⇒ Fresh colours
 - ⇒ 'No make-up' make-up
 - ⇒ Simple outlook
 - ⇒ Angel
 - ⇒ Child
 - ⇒ Fairy
 - ⇒ Water
 - ⇒ Air



philosophy

discover purity
find hope
experience grace



philosophy:
science gives us better skin,
inspiration gives us better days

skin care | fragrance | bath & body | gifting

AIKAKAUSMEDIA

Messages of cosmetics ads



8. The Natural Myth

- ⇒ Natural look, 'no make-up'
- ⇒ The model doesn't look perfect
- ⇒ Nude
- ⇒ 'In a natural state', half-messy hair
- ⇒ Elements of nature: sky, leaf, water drop, fruit, grass, wild flowers
- ⇒ Freedom, ease, lightness

B. SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS



Messages of cosmetics ads

B. SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS

9. Woman's roles and myths



“ Drama Queen

- ⇒ Diva-like
- ⇒ Capricious, uncontrollable
- ⇒ Extreme emotions
- ⇒ Role player

“ Femme Fatale

- ⇒ Fateful, scary
- ⇒ Having power
- ⇒ Unreachable
- ⇒ Covert



Messages of cosmetics ads

B. SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS



Valores Consult
www.semiotiikka.com

9. Woman's roles and myths

" Goddess

- ⇒ Divinely beautiful
- ⇒ Put on a pedestal
- ⇒ Self-conscious, sure
- ⇒ A bit distant

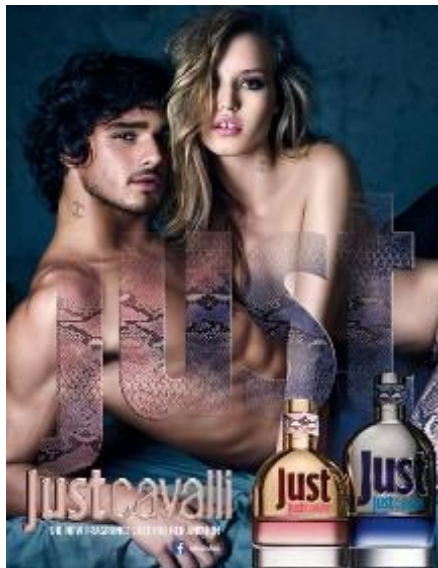
" Ethereal Beauty

- ⇒ Light, blonde outlook
- ⇒ Innocent, dreamy
- ⇒ Pure
- ⇒ Soft
- ⇒ Sensitive expression



AIKAKAUSMEDIA

Messages of cosmetics ads



Valores Consult
www.semiotiikka.com

B. SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS

9. Woman's roles and myths

" Lolita

- ⇒ A disobedient girl
- ⇒ Adventurous, defiant
- ⇒ Experimenting
- ⇒ 'Party girl'

" Nature's child

- ⇒ Girlish
- ⇒ Spontaneous, open
- ⇒ Looks at the reader
- ⇒ A safe 'girl next door'



AIKAKAUSMEDIA

Messages of cosmetics ads

B. SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS



9. Woman's roles and myths

" Film star

- ⇒ A well-known beauty to admire
- ⇒ (Penelope Cruz, Cate Blanchett, Beyoncé, Lana Del Rey, Julianne Moore)
- ⇒ Film star, top model, singer, superstar
- ⇒ 'Larger than life' gives strength to the product advertised

" Nightbird

- ⇒ A grown-up version of Lolita
- ⇒ Independent, hard, dominant
- ⇒ A fickle, impudent woman
- ⇒ Watching her own interests

Messages of cosmetics ads

B. SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS

10. Rational argumentation

- ⇒ Rational argumentation convinces
- ⇒ Clear information about the product and its qualities
- ⇒ Before – after reasoning
- ⇒ Scientific names of ingredients
- ⇒ Lots of text, rational fonts

[illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible]

Messages of cosmetics ads



11a. Package is the message

- ⇒ Package is a sensuous experience, that creates luxury, magic, purity, naturalness in the user experience
- ⇒ A delightful package in itself is a reason to buy the product
- ⇒ Treasure-like package => exclusive product
- ⇒ A pharmacy-like package => medical product
- ⇒ Exciting package => exciting product etc.



Valores Consult
www.semiotiikka.com

B. SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS



AIKAKAUSMEDIA

Messages of cosmetics ads



EAU DE LACOSTE SENSUELLE

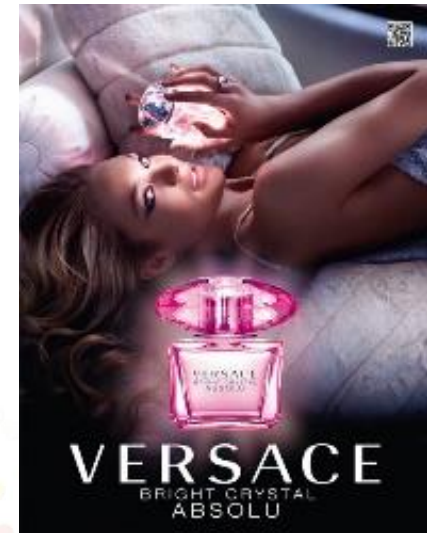


Valores Consult
www.semiotikka.com

11b. Bottle shape as a message

- ⇒ In perfumes the shape and the colour of the bottle communicates the essence of the perfume and the brand
- ⇒ **Round-shaped** = Harmonic, conciliation, self-indulgent, soft-valued, childlike, natural
- ⇒ **Square-shaped** = materialistic, possessive, taking care of one's own interests, rational, factory-made.
- ⇒ **Multi-angled** = fickle, erratic, selfish, urbane
- ⇒ **Dark** = heavy, mysterious, strong, experienced
- ⇒ **Light** = light, delicate, fresh, young
- ⇒ **Gold, silver, jewel** = luxury, expensive, special, rare, greedy, possessive
- ⇒ **Colours** => see the colour messages

B. SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS



AIKAKAUSMEDIA

Messages of cosmetics ads

B. SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS

12. The Brand Myths

Brands that themselves are mythical

- ⇒ So expensive, so desirable, so perfect, that have grown into mythical proportions in the reader's mind
- ⇒ Brands used by myths: Marilyn Monroe's Chanel 5, princess Diana's First
- ⇒ Designer- perfume brands: Givenchy, Giorgio Armani, Kenzo, Versace...

Established big brands

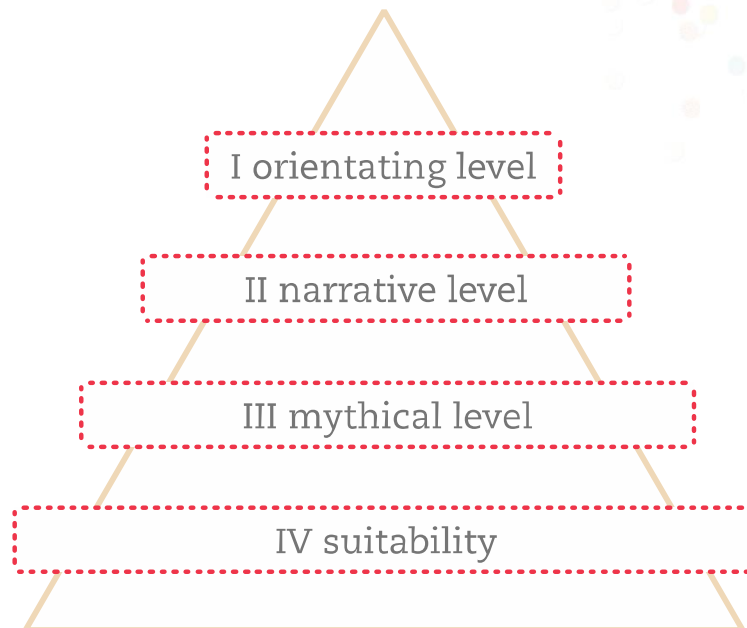
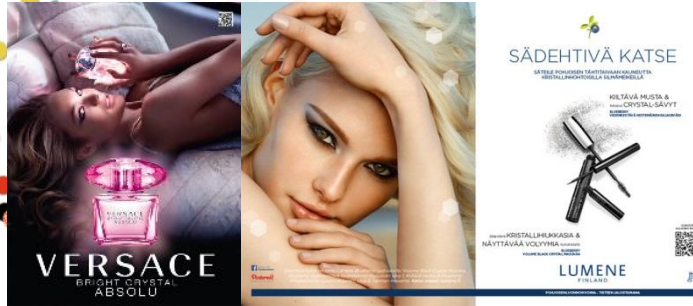
- ⇒ Estée Lauder, Clinique, Lancôme
- ⇒ YSL, Dior, Shiseido etc

Daily consumer brands with personality

- ⇒ Lumene (forest, berries)
- ⇒ L'Oreal (quality at not high price)
- ⇒ Maybelline (speed, youth)



Messages of cosmetics ads



Summary

1. A cosmetic ad should be BEAUTIFUL.
Beautiful model, beautiful object, beautiful lay-out, beautiful photo.
2. The ad should offer LUXURY and QUALITY.
3. DEMONSTRATING the PRODUCT and its function is important.
4. RATIONAL ARGUMENTS interest as long as they are credible.
5. The stronger the MYTHICAL, the better.
6. CLEAR lay-out, not too much text.
7. STUNNING will be seen and noticed.

Comparison of cosmetics and fashion advertising

COSMETICS

- ⇒ Beautiful face in close-up
- ⇒ Eye contact creates a bond
- ⇒ Traditional and at the same time mythical is the best
- ⇒ Feeling makes a big bonus
- ⇒ You have to demonstrate the product
- ⇒ Package communicates a lot!

FASHION

- ⇒ Beautiful people
- ⇒ Subordinated to the reader's look, eye contact not often
- ⇒ Surprising, different, crazy is the best
- ⇒ Story makes a big bonus
- ⇒ Product is not always shown well
- ⇒ (No package)




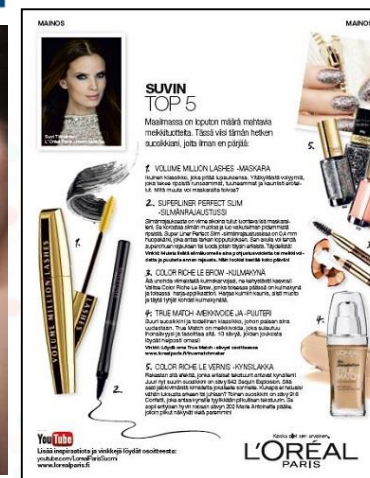
Comparison of cosmetics and fashion advertising

COSMETICS

- ⇒ Sensuous luxury
- ⇒ Perfection
- ⇒ Purity
- ⇒ The Science Myth
- ⇒ Woman as sensing subject,
partly object, too
- ⇒ Drama Queen, Femme Fatale,
- ⇒ Goddess, Ethereal Beauty, Lolita,
Nature's child
- ⇒ Film star, Night bird

FASHION

- ⇒ Upper-class luxury
 - ⇒ Idleness
 - ⇒ Obliviousness, forgetting
 - ⇒ Peculiar time, place and story
 - ⇒ Woman as an object,
as sex-object, too
 - ⇒ Femme Fatale, Superwoman
 - ⇒ Top model, Muse, Lolita, Nature's
child
 - ⇒ Sex object
- 



Wishing you beautiful and functional cosmetic advertising!