

Useful Books on Advertising

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In an attempt to identify useful principles on persuasion through advertising, I have scanned, skimmed, or read hundreds of books over the past 12 years. I have posted what I believe to be the 48 most useful advertising-related books at <http://advertisingprinciples.com> with brief annotations. They are organized into categories such as "expert advice," "research," "writing," "examples," and "history."

I identify 18 of them as being particularly useful. As it turned out, Amazon customers gave high ratings to many of these choices; of the 15 rated on Amazon, six had the top rating (5 stars), and only one was rated with fewer than 4 stars.

How does one locate useful advertising-related books? First off, about 40% of the books do not have the word "advertising" or "ad" or "commercial" in the title, so you would miss many good books when searching on Amazon. Then assume that you did an advanced search on Amazon using "advertising" in the title as well as a subject. On November 13, 2004, I obtained 2,020 books in such a search. When the books were ranked by number of copies sold, three of the books on my list were in the top 10: *Ogilvy on Advertising* (1983) was #1, followed by Caples (originally published in 1932) at #2, and Hopkins (1923) at #8. Given the many recent books on advertising, it is interesting that these old books are among the leaders in sales. If you had the time to examine the 50 top-selling books in this category, you would find only seven of the books on my top 48 list. In my opinion then, you will miss some excellent books if you rely on best sellers.

In short, by using Amazon to search, the task would be long and inefficient. So how did I personally locate these books? While references in books and papers produced many of these books, perhaps the most fruitful approach was to ask colleagues. So, allow me to ask you: Does the list under "Books on Advertising" at <http://advertisingprinciples.com> overlook any useful books relevant to persuasion through advertising? Feel free to mention any book that you have written.