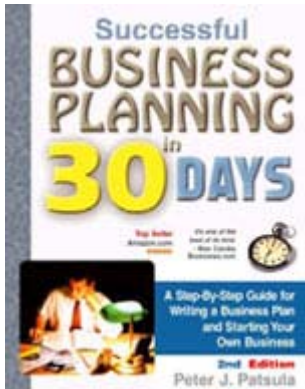


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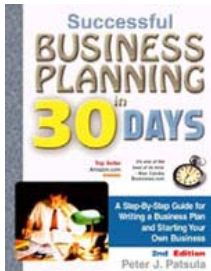
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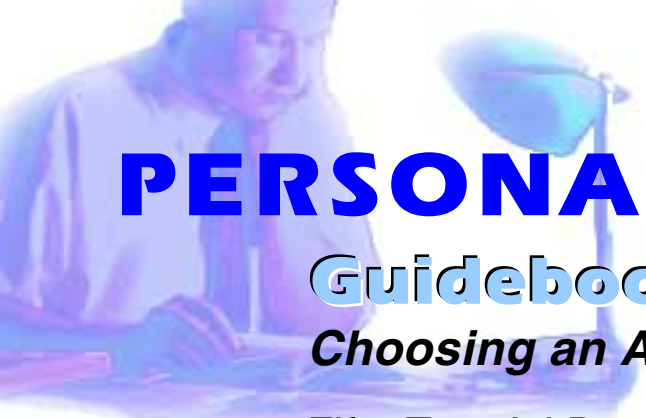
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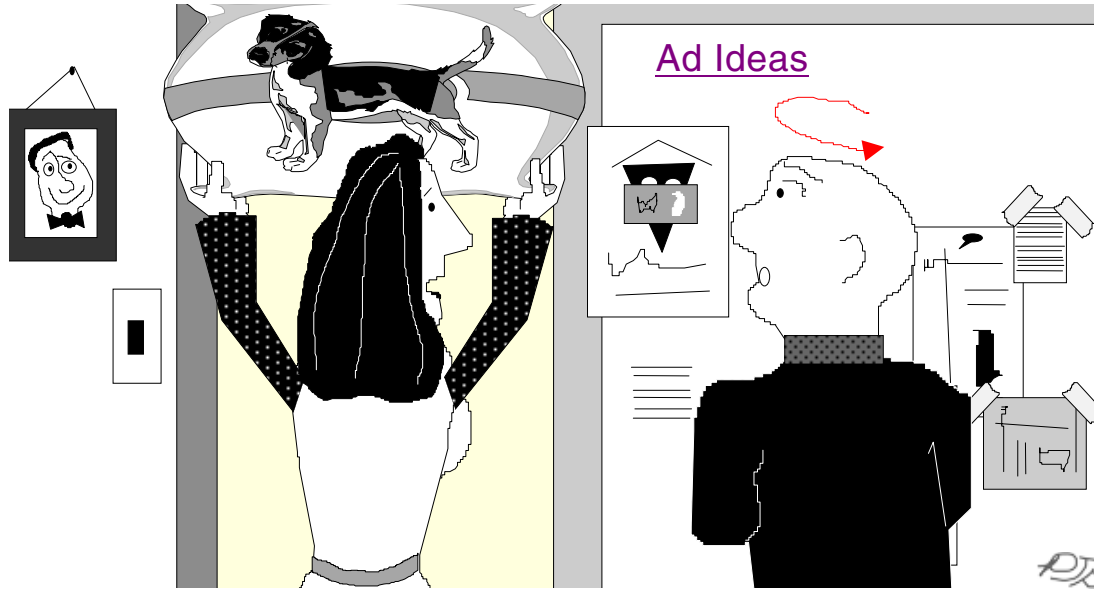


PERSONAL PLANNING

Guidebook #55:

Choosing an Advertising Design Theme 3

Fifty-Two Ad Design Themes.....4



“How about . . . If YOU find a better, more nutritious dog food than our Harry’s Fortified Puppy Chow . . . why, Harry will eat it himself!”

Smallbusinesstown.com

CHOOSING AN ADVERTISING DESIGN THEME

ADVERTISING always seems to work better if it is designed around a central focus or theme. In this guidebook, **52 DIFFERENT TYPES OF ADS** complete with examples of headlines and graphics are exemplified. Use these formats as guidelines to help you figure out what might be an effective central focus for your promotional campaign.

FIFTY-TWO AD DESIGN THEMES

THE FOLLOWING 52 basic ad design themes or formats can be used alone or in combination with one another.

1. **Advertorial or News Ad** – Announces a new product, something new about an existing product, or states a position on a social, business or consumer issue. Stated positions are backed with engaging evidence, an analysis, and most importantly, a product solution.

Typically, this type of ad uses a newspaper type headline and a newspaper editorial format. Its headline focuses on recent changes or developments, especially ones that suggest

profit or self-gain to its readers. This ad format is especially useful in helping you reach a segment of the population that may share attitudes or ideologies similar to your own.

Example: “LONGEVITY DRUG”

Headline: *Chinese Scientist Invents Incredible Longevity Drug!*

Graphic: Father Time being chased by a Ninja warrior.

2. **Announcing Ad** – Announces a new product, idea or service.

Example: “CASSETTE PLAYER”

Headline: *Announcing! The Worlds Smallest and Best Sounding Cassette*

Ads are the cave art of the twentieth century.

MARSHALL MCLUBAN

Player.

Graphic: A cassette player in the palm of a hand.

3. Before & After Ad – Shows improvements gained by using the product.

Example: “WEED TRIMMER”

Headline: *Aceman’s Weeder Eater – Can You Live Without it?*

Graphic: A “before” picture of a cottage with a white picket fence overgrown with weeds, and an “after” picture with the landscape fully trimmed and a proud owner, Weeder Eater in hand, standing boldly in front.

4. Benefit Ad – Grabs attention by picking out the most important customer benefit of the product being advertised and presenting it in a clear, bold and dramatic fashion. This type of ad be-

lieves that if you can’t hook the reader with your strongest benefit – the most important reason why he or she should be interested in what you’re selling – then the reader won’t get past the headline and into the main body of the ad.

NOTE The visual always illustrates the benefit stated in the headline.

Example: “WEIGHT REDUCTION”

Headline: *Lose 30 Pounds in 30 Days and Eat Anything You Want.*

Graphic: An attractive, slim vivacious looking woman eating a chocolate fudge sundae.

Before & After Ad – Shows improvements gained by using the product.

Your Money No Questions Asked.

5. Cartoon or Cartoon Strip Ad –

Uses everything from simple stick figures to complex, highly sophisticated graphics.

Example: “LAPTOP COMPUTER”

Headline: *50% of all Computer Users Suffer from Eyestrain.*

Graphic: A cartoon showing six things a computer user can do to reduce eye strain, including in the last cartoon, buying a Toshiba laptop with the new anti-glare, super bright active matrix screen.

6. Challenge Ad – Challenges the readers to find a better product than yours.

Example: “TOASTER OVEN”

Headline: *If You Can find A Better Toaster Oven Than GE’s New Broiling Magic, BUY it and We Will Refund*

Graphic: GE’s Broiling Magic Toaster Oven, displayed with all the delicious foods it can cook.

7. Clue or Teaser Ad – Is substantially more involved than a curiosity type ad. In this type of ad, you let your readers in on a secret, little by little. You might unveil a complete message over a period of minutes, hours, days, weeks (or even months) in a radio, TV, or printed ad series. This form of advertising is

Advertising is derived from the Latin “ad,” meaning “toward” and “verture,” meaning “to turn.” Together, the meaning is to turn toward a product or business.

FUNFACT

especially useful for triggering interest especially if your target market is pre-disposed to Agatha Christi novels.

Example: “CITY TRANSIT”

Headline: *I hate driving to work!*

Graphic: **First page:** No visual whatsoever. No body copy, identifying marks, or logos either. Just a blank page with its headlines in bold letters. **Second page** (other side): Three people sitting in a City Transit Bus. One is a professional woman reading the Wall Street Journal, another is an elderly man eating his breakfast, and the last one is a worn out, tie dangling from the neck, stay up all night, first year out of college Harvard MBA yuppie wanna be, who is fast asleep.

- 8. Command Ad** – Forcibly tells the reader to take action. This action is

usually directed towards getting the prospect to buy or use the product or service being advertised.

Example: “DRINK MIX”

Headline: *Get More Punch Per Mouthful.
Drink Sugarman’s Tropical Mix*

Graphic: A small cute girl (4-6) handing a big mean looking boxer a glass of Sugarman’s Tropical Mix punch.

- 9. Comparative Ad** – Shows how your product stacks up against the competition.

Example: “COMPUTER”

Headline: *More Megs Per Buck and Faster Too!*

Graphic: A graph showing different

Command Ad – Forcibly tells the reader to take action.

performance values of your computer vs. the competitions.

10. Contest or Sweepstakes Ad – Offers an opportunity to win prizes or money.

Example: “BREAKFAST CEREAL”

Headline: *Win a Trip to Tahiti With Only Three Box Tops From Kellogg’s Corn Flakes!*

Graphic: Attractions in Tahiti and a the Corn Flakes Rooster logo wearing dark glasses and basking in the sun.

11. Conversational Letter Ad – Is an ad written and published in letter form. It usually consists of informal chatty passages that express the opinions and philosophies your company holds (and hopefully your target markets), and subtly suggests why your prospects

should buy from you.

Example: “ENERGY CONSERVATION”

Headline: *Dear, Mr. President . . . Am I Going to Freeze in the Dark When I Grow Up?*

Graphic: A letter with a small child’s handwriting, a child’s hand, a colored pencil with its eraser chewed off, and an energy conservation symbol.

12. Demonstration Ad – Shows how the product works.

Example: “ORANGE JUICER”

Headline: *Save Two Hours a Day Using Jay Redmock’s Industrial Orange Juicer*

Conversational Letter Ad – Is an ad written and published in letter form.

Graphic: A diagram showing how Redmox's Juicer peels oranges automatically.

13. Directive Ad – Tells the reader to do something, anything to spark their interest (similar to the Command Ad).

Example: "HOTEL"

Headline: *Save Your Skin. Quick! Name the Best Hotel in Munich.*

Graphic: Pictures of the Hilton in various famous world cities.

14. Empathy Ad – Attempts to empathize with the reader. Companies that sell aspirin, sinus congestion relief and stomachache remedies use this approach a lot.

Example: "HOLIDAY CLUB"

Headline: *Feeling Tired, Sad or Downright Lonely . . . Perhaps Club Med Can Turn Your Blues Into Sunshine.*

Graphic: A middle-aged woman surrounded by exciting people who are dancing, horseback riding, swimming, surfing and sun tanning.

15. Endorsement Ad – Features a famous user of the product or a celebrity speaking out in favor of the product. This type of ad lets the celebrity do the selling for you. Usually printed in quotes.

Example: "GOLF BALLS"

Headline: *"Spalding Pro-Tour Golf Balls Consistently Give Me More Yards Per Whack . . . with Uncanny Accuracy"*– Bob Cook

Endorsement Ad – Features a famous user of the product or a celebrity speaking out in favor of the product.

Graphic: A picture of Bob Cook sinking his legendary 140 ft world record putt on the 18th hole at St. Andrews during the International Fourball Pro Am tournament on Oct. 1, 1976

- 16. Fictional Character Ad** – Centers around a fictional character such as *The Man from Glad*, *Jolly Green Giant*, *Ronald MacDonald*, or the *Maytag Repairman*.

Example: “CANNED CORN”

Headline: “*The Sweetest Corn I’ve Ever Made . . . Ho Ho.*” – Green Giant

Graphic: The Jolly Green Giant overlooking a field of ripe corn.

- 17. Fictional Places Ad** – Emphasizes a fictional place such as Marlboro Country.

Example: “CIGARETTES”

Headline: *The Cool Sensation of Virginia Slims.*

Graphic: A man on a horse smoking as he heads off into the sunset.

- 18. Free Information Ad** – Offers a free brochure, pamphlet, or other information and concentrates on getting the readers to send for free literature rather than selling the product directly.

Example: “SPORTS TRIVIA BOOKLET”

Headline: *This Sports Trivia Booklet is yours FREE for the Asking!*

Graphic: Sports Trivia Booklet being held up by a feisty Granny wearing a football helmet.

Fictional Places Ad – Emphasizes a fictional place such as Marlboro Country.

19. Gimmick Ad – Uses bizarre patterns, formulas, maps, colors, recipes, unusual designs, shapes, or any other novel attention getting device to stimulate the senses of its readers. It tends to rely on its radical design and layout to grab attention, not its headline.

Example: “INSURANCE COMPANY”

Headline: *When You Need Us, We Won't Keep You in the Dark.*

Graphic: A brilliant bluish gray computer generated hurricane filled with bizarre almost imperceptible shapes that all seem to direct and funnel your attention to a solitary house with orange yellow candle light cascading its warmth out from a single window to the darkened surroundings behind it.

20. Guarantee Ad – Focuses on the

guarantee, not the product.

Example: “DISHWASHER”

Headline: *No Worries for Ten Years . . . If Only Life Could Come With A Guarantee as IronClad as Omega's.*

Graphic: A Maytag dishwasher.

21. Hornblowing Ad – Talks about how good its products are.

Example: “WATCH”

Headline: *The Most Luxurious and Finest-Ever-Built Watch the World has*

The advertisements in a newspaper are more full of knowledge in respect to what is going on in a state or community than the editorial columns are.

HENRY WARD BEECHER

Ever Known.

Graphic: Arnold Swartzenegger with a big grin brandishing a new model Rolex.

22. “How-To” or Advice Ad – Explains how to do something that is of interest to its readers. It tends to hint at specific information and details beneficial to the purchase.

Example: “CAMPING BOOK”

Headline: *How-To Gut a Fish in Thirty Seconds or Less and Other Camping Secrets.*

Graphic: A picture of campers enjoying salmon steaks over a camp fire.

23. Indirect or Curiosity Ad – Uses an obscure headline designed to arouse curiosity and entices or forces the reader to read the body copy to get the

real message.

Example: “APPLE FLAVORED POP”

Headline: *Discover an Orchard Full of Flavor in Every Sip of Apple Fizz!*

Graphic: An apple orchard in the soft misty light of dawn

24. Informative Ad – Gives useful information relating to the use of the product in general rather than pushing the product directly.

Example: “ENGINE OIL”

Headline: *One Quart of Quaker Oil Lasts Longer in your Engine than Two Quarts of the Leading Economy Brand.*

“How-To” or Advice Ad – Explains how to do something that is of interest to its readers.

Graphic: A series of pictures and charts with captions showing why Quaker State oil is better than other value brands.

25. Invent-a-Word Ad – Coins a word to describe a product or its application.

Example: “VEGETABLE SLICER”

Headline: *Ramanize it With Ronco’s New Ramanizing Food Cutter.*

Graphic: A “Ramanizer” with different vegetables and fruits all neatly cut up and organized like catering dishes.

26. Leadership Ad – Caters to those who demand number one status.

Example: “SPORTS CAR”

Headline: *For Those Who Demand the Best Workmanship.*

Graphic: A passion red Lexus with a beautiful blond woman in a black

stretch gown sprawled seductively on its hood.

27. Location Ad – Features a product used in an unusual location to highlight its versatility, usefulness, convenience or ruggedness.

Example: “JEEP”

Headline: *If You’re So Inclined, We Can Make it Happen.*

Graphic: A Jeep Cherokee on top of a mountain.

28. Meet-the-Advertiser Ad – Has the

It is not necessary to advertise food to hungry people, fuel to cold people, or houses to the homeless.

JOHN KENNETH GALBRAITH
Economist

advertiser appearing in the ad to speak about his or her own product.

Example: “CHICKEN SANDWICH”

Headline: *“It’s a Dirty Job but Someone’s Got to Do it.”*

Graphic: The owner of Wendy’s trying his new Lemon Glazed Chicken Sandwich.

shirt.

29. New Age or New Wave Ad – Relies on far out graphics and/or offbeat copy to grab attention. It tries to tap into the latest trends and/or slang of the youth.

Example: “CLOTHES”

Headline: *What Would Have Happened if Rembrant was Five When He Painted the Mona Lisa?*

Graphic: A Picasso influenced rendition of the Mona Lisa painted by a five year old wearing Al Sendner’s Designer Jeans and multi-colored

30. Offer Ad – Focuses on the offer, sale or event, not on the product.

Example: “FURNITURE”

Headline: *Limited Time Offer . . . Don’t Miss the Brick’s No Interest No Down Payment Fabulous Furniture Bonanza Weekend.*

Graphic: A company spokesperson dressed up in rodeo gear and riding a leather couch like a horse.

31. Outlandish Statement Ad – Starts with an *outlandish* statement and/or graphic.

Example: “HUMOROUS BOOK”

New Age or New Wave Ad – Relies on far out graphics and/or offbeat copy to grab attention.

Headline: *Send Now for the Only Book on Crime Ever Written by a Dog!*

Graphic: A dog sitting in front of a typewriter, with glasses falling down its nose and a pencil sticking out behind its ear.

on Foods \$111.32 . . . The Choice is Yours.

Graphic: Two identical shopping carts full of groceries.

32. Pain/Pleasure Ad – Shows a picture of someone in pain and some one in pleasure using the advertising product.

Example: “LAWN MOWER”

Headline: *Who Would YOU Rather Be?*

Graphic: A person in a hammock and a person trying to start an old beat up lawn mower in deep uncut grass.

33. Pay Less Ad – Advertises its price and being much cheaper than the competition.

Example: “GROCERY STORE”

Headline: *At Superstore \$99.45 . . . at Save*

34. Plain’n Simple No Nonsense Ad –

Provides a direct straightforward presentation of the facts. It says what you want to say in the simplest way, with perhaps a little bit of injected enthusiasm.

Example: “CHERRY SODA POP”

Headline: *Pure, Fresh, 100% Natural Cherry-Flavored Soda.*

Graphic: A can with a triangular beam of light coming out of it. In the beam

Pay Less Ad – Advertises its price and being much cheaper than the competition.

of light are floating cherries.

35. Prediction Ad – Makes a prediction and usually offers facts or case histories to prove it.

Example: “INSULATION”

Headline: *You will save 20 percent of your energy costs when you insulate your house with Product A.*

Graphic: A table showing the savings with different brands of insulation.

36. Price & Where-to-buy Ad – Announces a sale, describes the product in a straightforward manner, gives the price and discount, and tells you where to buy it.

Example: “WOMAN’S BLOUSE”

Headline: *\$7.99 . . . Only K-mart Can Offer This Kind of Quality at Such a Low Price.*

Graphic: A picture of a woman’s blouse

37. Problem/Solution Ad – Presents a problem and then provides a solution or cure.

Example: “AIR DRIVEN NAIL HAMMER”

Headline: *Fed-up of Pounding Nails . . . Get Sears Nail Driver and Throw Away Your Hammer Forever*

Graphic: A man in tattered overalls and a big throbbing swollen thumb.

38. Pun Ad – Uses the headline to attract attention with clever word play. The pun is explained in the copy.

Example: “BALL-POINT PEN”

Problem/Solution Ad – Presents a problem and then provides a solution or cure.

Headline: *The Pen That Uses its Head.*

Graphic: A picture of a beautiful line drawing using a BIC .

- 39. Question Ad** – Arouses curiosity by asking a question in the headline and answering it in the copy. However, beware of using questions where a negative answer is damaging to your image.

Example: “PEACH JUICE”

Headline: *Do You Truly Know The Taste of Real Peach Flavor With No Added Sugar Or Caffeine?*

Graphic: A juicy peach with a big bite in it.

- 40. Quotation Ad** – Starts with a quote. This quote could be from someone famous, someone from your company or industry or a fictional character in a story you wrote or someone else wrote.

Example: “SUMMER CAMP”

Headline: *“We took a few steps into this dark cave, and then it happened . . .”*

Graphic: A bunch of kids peering into a cave.

- 41. Reader Involvement Ad** – Looks like a crossword puzzle, a quiz, a “yes or no” questionnaire, an inventory form, an invoice, or even a fill-in-the-blanks-game to name but a few of its designs. Reader Involvement Ads are all designed to get the reader thinking about some need – and then ultimately to get them thinking about your product and how it meets those needs.

You can tell the ideals of a nation by its advertisements.

NORMAN DOUGLAS

British Writer

Example: “GARDEN PRODUCTS”

Headline: *Can you spot five things wrong with this picture?*

Graphic: A picture of a back yard garden with abundant weeds in between carrots planted crooked, a gopher sticking its head out of a hole, a bag of pesticides with skull and cross bones on it, a dilapidated wooden composting bin, and a weekend gardener digging up the ground with an old fashioned hoe.

42. `Reason Why' Ad – Presents some or all of the reasons why the readers should buy the product.

Example: “FILING SYSTEM”

Headline: *Here's Why You Can't Live Without ACME's Fileaway Home Organizer!*

Graphic: A man pulling out his hair surrounded in bills, insurance policies and tax returns.

43. Reward Ad – Promises a reward for reading the ad.

Example: “BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB”

Headline: *You May Have Already Won! Read Inside for More Details.*

Graphic: A picture of a man with a fist full of dollar in his hand.

44. Rhetorical Question Ad – Presents a question to the reader that is not answered in the remaining body copy. It is merely posed to create curiosity.

Example: “CLUB FOR PEOPLE WITH HIGH IQ'S”

Headline: *Are You Smart Enough?*

Graphic: A picture of Einstein.

45. Selective Ad – Names its market in

Reward Ad – Promises a reward for reading the ad.

its headline. Uses words that pinpoint the exact particular group it is trying to reach. Headlines like “Attention, Educators,” “Special Notice for Jacuzzi Owners,” or “An Urgent Message for All Peanut Lovers”; all scream *read me* to their intended audiences.

Example: “HAIR & FITNESS TONIC”

Headline: *Bald Overweight Men, Have I Got a Cure for YOU!*

Graphic: A Gypsy Traveling Salesman holding up a bottle of a Tonic guaranteed to grow hair and make you lose weight. The bottle seems to zoom out of the page. Salesman looks shady but lovable.

- 46. “Shock Pants off the Consumer” Ad** – Tries to shock readers into buying a certain product. It usually shows you what would happen if you don’t

buy their product.

Example: “MOTORCYCLE HELMET”

Headline: *How Much is Your Head Worth?*

Graphic: A watermelon being thrown out of a car moving 60 miles an hour.

- 47. Slogan Ad** – Uses a company’s popular Slogan as a lead-in instead of a closing statement.

Example: “CANNED POP”

Headline: *Gotta Have It!*

Graphic: A teenager drinking a can of Pepsi after skiing down Mount Everest.

- 48. Steal a Popular Title Ad** – Takes a title from a famous song, movie or

Slogan Ad – Uses a company’s popular Slogan as a lead-in instead of a closing statement.

book and attaches it to its product.

Example: “WOMAN’S DRESS”

Headline: *Try a Little Tenderness . . . Bake Your Loved One Aunt Bessies Secret Recipe Chewy Chunkie Chip Cookies.*

Graphic: An artist’s rendition of Ottis Redding digging into a big plate of Aunt Bessier cookies.

49. Story Ad – Tells a story involving people and the product. This type of headline teases the reader into reading the rest of the copy.

Example: “NEW BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY”

Headline: *Once Upon a Time . . . There Lived a Man Who Hated his Job!*

Graphic: A factory worker wiping the sweat from his brow. In the background a Foreman yelling out orders.

50. Story with a Twist Ad – Presents a typical situation with an unusual insight.

Example: “AUTOMOBILE”

Headline: *At Saab, This Is What We Call A Beautiful Car*

Graphic: Photo of a Saab smashed in an accident. However, the driver’s compartment remains intact.

51. Testimonial or Case History Ad – Presents compelling human-interest anecdotes from people who have found great success with your product. Testimonies tend to be short while case histories can be long and in-

Story with a Twist Ad – Presents a typical situation with an unusual insight.

volved. This type of ad works because people love to read stories about other people's success & tragedies.

Example: "LEARNING TO PLAY THE PIANO"

Headline: *I Played Piano in Ten Days*

Graphic: A picture of a 35 year-old woman dressed like Mozart.

is the Time To Save More than Ever

Graphic: A caricature of a mythic creature strangling a 9-5 worker and shaking him upside down to empty his pockets.



52. Tie-in-With Current-Events Ad –

Brings timeliness and urgency to the selling proposition. If you can tie your product and ad to a widely reported news story, your chances of creating product interest are greater. For instance, you could shape your ad around a foreign affairs trend, a popular historical character, or a new consumer fad.

Example: "BANKING SERVICE"

Headline: *The Recession is Gripping Us, Now*

The best ad is a good product.

ALAN H. MEYER