



Reading 82

For questions 1–6 read the text and answer the questions.

How will advertises reach us?

It's Superbowl live in 2020. Record-setting numbers of viewers are tuned in to watch the game by using handheld devices, that allow them to project the transmissions onto any flat surface. And in 2020, not unlike today, viewers are interested in the game, but they're actually more absorbed by the advertising. The commercials on screen are far better than they are now. Directors make sure they are moving, exciting, entertaining and technicians make sure the effects are breathtaking. It's not the commercials on screen that are the most interesting part, though: the really crucial advertising is hiding in plain sight on the field. Brand names blaze from each player 's shirt. The game is held at U-tech Stadium in U-tech town - formerly known as Philadelphia. Corporations will pay big money for the right to digitize logos onto the T-shirts of the fans in the stands. Logos of sponsors won't be painted on stadium signs or on the field any more. Thanks to technology that is already emerging, logos of sponsors will be digitally embedded in the image on your screen. The logos you see will be chosen depending on your personal interests and profile, and they 'll be different from the ones aimed at your next-door neighbours.

Advertising will change profoundly over the next couple of decades, although there's a good chance you won't notice the difference, since the most meaningful changes won't be visible to the casual observer. It's the changes that are happening underground that will count, and they're the ones we should be aware of. Advertising in the future will be stealthily and eerily targeted, disturbingly omnipresent and inescapable. Technology, naturally, will be the engine. User-tracking software that records your TV and Internet viewing habits in minute detail - and crosses it with your purchasing history - will allow the advertiser to know that you have children, that you eat meat, that your native tongue is Spanish and that your dishwasher is however many years old. That way you will be shown commercials for mini-vans, cheeseburgers and replacement dishwashers, all in Spanish, and not for sports cars, tofu and replacement refrigerators, in English. In fact, this technology already exists. Refined with data that track what kinds of online ads you tend to click on - funny, sentimental, fact-laden - every commercial will hit home.

Say what you will, that's a nifty trick. In the future, people won't be bothered with advertising messages irrelevant to them. They'll tend to like advertising better because it's so carefully tailored to their tastes and will begin to feel less like an intrusion. This works for the advertiser too because fewer dollars will be wasted. While it's a little dispiriting to think we can be so predictably manipulated, maybe that's a fair price to pay to avoid the pollution of messages you don't care about.

Nevertheless, it seems clear that the advertising outlets that exist today - TV and radio commercials, prints ads, billboards and taxi tops - will be inadequate for accommodating all the commercial messages that are agitating to get out. Advertising will therefore inevitably slip beyond the boundaries of the 30-second commercial and the full-page ad and migrate to the rest of the world, including entertainment, journalism and art. You can glimpse the future now. Product placement in movies is an obvious instance of where advertising has slipped outside its traditional container into entertainment. The music channels which are an entertainment medium designed expressly to sell records are another classic example. Every time an artist mentions a brand in their lyrics, advertising slips into art. If you have a tattoo of your team's name, you're already there. If you wear a T-shirt with a logo on it, you're also there but with less pain. Eventually, every surface that can display a message will be appropriated for advertising. A backlash is inevitable. Perhaps people will pay a premium to live in advertising-free zones.

People get very nervous when they see the line blurring between advertising and other forms of content; they think advertising is some kind of infection that pollutes the purity of art, ruins objectivity and distracts from the pleasure of entertainment. Yet this is missing the point. Surely consumers are smart and perfectly aware when they're being sold something; surely people who go to company websites are happy to find worthwhile information there and are capable of distinguishing between a commercial message and an editorial one? Art and journalism, until they became pretentious in the late 20th century, always relied on direct subsidy from private sources. Don't think for a minute that commercial interests didn't enter into it. The genuinely disturbing aspect of the ubiquity of advertising is that it has begun to supplant what was formally civic. Even the parks are gradually being renamed after corporations. The venerable Boston Garden was replaced not so long ago by the Fleet Centre: a city erased, its role played by a bank. A little town in the Pacific Northwest just renamed itself after a dotcom company in return for a generous donation. I won't mention the name here, since I figure advertising should be paid for. That's when advertising has gone too far: when it's become something we are, rather than something we see.

1 According to the writer, the greatest difference about TV audiences in 2020 is that they will

A require spectacular special effects to be persuaded to purchase anything.

- B have the right to choose the kind of commercials they wish to receive.
- C be exposed to different mediums of advertising than are common today.
- D appreciate certain programmes to a lesser extent than current audiences.

2 The writer suggests that over the next couple of decades, viewers will probably

- A be unaware of the effect that advertising has on them.
- B fail to realize how advertisers are promoting products.
- C resent the lack of privacy they have in their own homes.
- D feel pressurized to consume more disposable products.

3 In paragraph 3, what does the writer feel about the consumer being “predictably manipulated”?

- A He condemns it as a form of deception.
- B He believes people will be indignant at the removal of choice.
- C He suggests that this is a cost-effective approach for the consumer.
- D He states that consumers will appreciate the precision of this approach.

4 What does the writer state about the future of advertising outlets?

- A Current outlets will no longer be used for promotional purposes.
- B Advertisements will take on a globally similar style and approach.
- C Advertisers will overtake the importance of artistic value in music channels.
- D The high level of outlets will result in some people turning against advertising.

5 In paragraph 5, the writer warns that

- A advertising has turned what belonged to the public into commercial enterprise.
- B some customers are not able to discriminate between truth and subjectivity.
- C journalists have always regarded their readers as kinds of consumers.
- D people should be more wary about the invasion of advertising into art.

6 In writing this article, the writer's aim is to

- A highlight which consumers will be most vulnerable .
- B dispel unnecessary fear about the impact of advertising.
- C warn people against becoming part of an advertising culture .
- D discredit certain companies and expose their tactics .

*Источник задания: Плехановская олимпиада школьников,
финал 2017/18, 10–11 классы*

Reading 82 — Keys

KEY

1C 2B 3D 4D 5A 6C

EXPLANATION

It's Superbowl live in 2020. Record-setting numbers of viewers are tuned in to watch the game by using handheld devices, that allow them to project the transmissions onto any flat surface. And in 2020, not unlike today, viewers are interested in the game, but they're actually more absorbed by the advertising. The commercials on screen are far better than they are now. Directors make sure they are moving, exciting, entertaining and technicians make sure the effects are breathtaking. It's not the commercials on screen that are the most interesting part, though: the really crucial advertising is hiding in plain sight on the field. Brand names blaze from each player 's shirt. The game is held at U-tech Stadium in U-tech town - formerly known as Philadelphia. Corporations will pay big money for the right to digitize logos onto the T-shirts of the fans in the stands. Logos of sponsors won't be painted on stadium signs or on the field any more. Thanks to technology that is already emerging, logos of sponsors will be digitally embedded in the image on your screen. The logos you see will be chosen depending on your personal interests and profile, and they 'll be different from the ones aimed at your next-door neighbours. ①

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