

'People today are far too easily persuaded to spend money on things they don't need.' Do you agree that advertising has made us wasteful?



WRITERS AT WORK Model Composition Showcase : Secondary 4

David Ogilvy, the Father of Advertising, once said, "The more informative your advertising, the more persuasive it will be." It is no surprise that advertising is the art of convincing people to spend money they do not have for something they do not need. This is because the very principles of advertising warp our perspective of "wants" and "needs" and tell us that a better life awaits if only we would proceed with the purchase – a lie we can be easily bought into without discernment. While advertising has made most people wasteful, I believe that there remain people who are not swayed by advertising, and that it is our innate desires that have a more profound impact on our consumption habits.

The advertising industry feeds off human insecurity by making "wants" appear as "needs" and products or services as an entry into a coveted lifestyle. It portrays a desirable quality or way of life that can become ours, if only we purchase that good or service. By virtue of the principles of advertising, targeted consumers are meant to spend money – both on purchasing things not objectively needed for survival and on underusing perfectly usable items and services when they are replaced. When more people are doing the latter, it becomes clear that advertising is making us wasteful.

Good introduction with a quote

Stand and Answer to Question

Thesis Statement



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In addition, advertising has become increasingly ingenious over the years. Overt advertising forms hold their place still, but it is the subtle advertising forms that have taken over the show among the social media generation. While we watch short clips on TikTok, scroll through images on Instagram and watch reality television or livestream videos on YouTube, we are not only being entertained for our own recreation; we are also subconscious recipients of a well-crafted advertisement. These social media platforms enable tags and links, making the desired product or service (and by extension, lifestyle) a mere click away from us. Married with electronic cash and payment-by-instalment applications that makes it extremely convenient for consumers to fulfil our need for instant gratification, and that takes us down the slippery slope of repeated spending on impulse purchases. Once again, advertising has played its hand on making us wasteful.

Social media influencers endorse the latest food craze and flash fashion trends, inviting followers into their perfectly-curated lives by purchasing the same – reasonably-priced and seemingly harmless expenses. Tech giants such as Apple and Samsung tend to use traditional advertising channels with their astronomical marketing budgets.

Good evidence

Clear elaboration

Show
relevance to
our society

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The outcome? An unwritten rule that everyone should have the latest phone model from either brand. Everyone has one, and so must you. Just jump onto the bandwagon, or risk being uncool. With that, peer pressure has become a tool exploited by advertising too. Our everyday life is shaping our everyday purchases. Day after day, wherever we are, we are being persuaded by advertisements both consciously and subconsciously to buy before the lifespan of our gadgets has been maximised. **This is how advertising is making us wasteful.**

Advertising on its own, however, would not lead to waste if a consumer has clear judgment over whether something is a need or a want. One who is "too easily persuaded" is one who lacks discernment and possibly lacks 'self-restraints', however there is a group of people who believe that owning less is better than pursuing more. Possessions do not equate to joy – and in fact, often distract us from it. Such consumers are mindful of the impact of advertising, and ensure that their spending is careful and intentional. In short, it is possible to be immune to the persuasiveness of advertisements and not be wasteful.

[Link to question](#)



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In conclusion, one may argue that it is not advertising in itself that has made us wasteful; advertising merely feeds on our own insatiable desires for what we do not already have. Before the advent of influencers, we were influenced by that popular girl in class who seemed to have everything, that actor in a television series or even the lady seated next to us on the bus. By buying or imitating something they had, we fooled ourselves into thinking that we had become a little more of who they were – the person we wanted to become. Stepping into a shop and looking at its products would probably have fed the thought "I need this too!", or "This would be a good to have!". Advertising in the modern age has merely intensified the appeal of a good or service to the consumer's innate desire for what seems to be the better way of life. Thus, the villain in this narrative is not advertising, but our desires.

Good evidence to support point

Link to question, conclude



You acknowledged opposing viewpoints and skillfully refuted them with logic and evidence. This made your argument even more persuasive. Keep challenging ideas and strengthening your stance!

