

IJACT 20-9-5

Storytelling Marketing Strategy based on Utopian Value

Jeong-Hee Kim

Prof., Dept. of History & Visual Image Content, SunMoon Univ., Korea
savie11@sunmoon.ac.kr

Abstract

Storytelling plays a very important role in emotional marketing recently. Storytelling marketing emphasizes a unique story and mythical meaning of the product, rather than its practical function. This is a faithful reflection of what the Dream Society has proposed. In this article, we are researching the consumption value system, and analyze various cases focusing on a coffee advertisement. In particular, by delivering a story, we will concentrate on advertising that appeals to utopian values and discusses the actual impact that it brings. If we communicate utopian values to consumers through various stories, business effects will be maximized, which will strengthen the brand image. The originality of this paper is to discuss the theory of consumption value system positively with the concept of storytelling. Therefore, we will draw conclusions as to which orientation is most ideal for storytelling in advertising. Understanding these business models will help you build an effective marketing strategy for the Dream Society.

Keywords: Storytelling, Emotional Marketing, Consumption Value System, Utopian value, Dream Society

1. Storytelling for Emotional Marketing

Today, storytelling is used in various fields of society. The story has been with the origin of humankind and has a very long history; From the ancient epic narrated by oral tradition to the story reproduced by modern high-tech media. There is an academic term called "Homo Narrans" to express the human desire for storytelling. It is also very significant that one of the fundamental attributes of the story is a tool for human beings to recognize the world. As such, the story has been remarkable for a long time with our lives.

Because of the value of such stories, storytelling is a useful means of human communication. What is the attribute of the story? Story text is dynamic first. Unlike an editorial or an explanation, a person moves in the flow of time rather than a person who is stationary. A character as a proper noun makes an event through concrete actions in a specific spatiotemporal background. Usually, at the beginning of the story, the hero who is in a state of shortage and imbalance experiences conflict. Then, the main character with an intense will has a structure that restores the balance of life through struggle. The nature of these stories gives people the psychological effects of immersion and empathy. Therefore, the delivery of messages through storytelling is far more potent than that delivered as abstract phrases.

Let me give you an example of the movie <Malaton>. The story of the character called "Chowon," an autistic child, inspired and impressed many people's emotions. In Korean society after the film was released, the perception of the disabled was remarkably improved. That is, the interest in a specific person leads to an

Manuscript Received: July 22, 2020 / Revised: August 14, 2020 / Accepted: August 25, 2020

Corresponding Author: savie11@sunmoon.ac.kr

Author's affiliation

Prof., Dept. of History & Visual Image Content, SunMoon Univ., Korea

interest in the category to which the person belongs. Storytelling of the movie delivered a message as a powerful tool of communication that was incomparable to the abstract phrase [1]. In the case of the movie <Crucible> it showed the power of reaching to form a social discourse, urging the re-examination of the case and enacting relevant laws. Storytelling has become a vehicle to spread various social phenomena and movements, not just fiction [2].

Another example is the election of US President Barack Obama. When he was elected president in 2008, the New York Times pointed out that it was "an epic victory." It means that a narrative strategy has worked successfully, such as creating narratives that embody narrative identity, delivering stories by adjusting timing and rhythm throughout the campaign, and borrowing metaphors to frame candidates' idealistic messages [3].

In the field of advertising marketing, storytelling is increasingly used for effective communication, and there are various previous studies on this [4-6]. However, what is the reason that the term "storytelling" is emerging recently and attracting attention? This phenomenon is global and can be understood from a paradigm perspective. Futurist Rolf Jensen pointed out that the paradigm shifts from the center of reason to the center of emotion [7]. Humankind has become more interested in mental values, or emotional elements as the pursuit of material have been met to some extent. As a result, our society is transformed into a Dream Society that buys and sells dreams and emotions. It is the storyteller that society demands. This is because the story is the most appropriate material to touch human imagination and emotion. Therefore, emotional marketing using storytelling can be a very effective strategy appealing to consumers today.

The Products sold on the market today are already guaranteed a certain level of quality. So, in this age, consumers buy products that contain stories that stimulate their imagination. Successful companies around the world already see this need for consumption. Kerry Roberts, CEO of Saatchi & Saatchi, a global advertising agency, said opening a consumer's purse is ultimately love. The word 'Love marks,' which he created, means "a deep mark like love" that the best company leaves in the hearts of customers [8]. He claimed that to survive the brand, consumers should be connected with sensibility rather than reason. Love marks creates infinite customers with 'loyalty beyond reason.' He named Harley Davidson, Starbucks and Apple as Love marks companies.

This article discusses the fact that storytelling can be actively used in the promotional marketing of brand and product. Representative examples familiar to us are as follows [9]. A lighter in the pocket of an American soldier in the Vietnam War saved the soldier. This story has made Zippo lighters into a global brand. The story of a French nobleman treated in a small town in the Alps has become a brand-name story of world-class bottled water Evian. The key is to stimulate emotions and empathize consumers with a dramatic story that is not an essential characteristic of a product. We can see more about how emotional marketing using storytelling realizes utopian values.

In this paper, the consumption value system will be discussed because marketing strategy using storytelling plays an essential role in realizing utopian value. The social phenomenon that is being transformed into a paradigm centered on emotion beyond information society is connected with the concept of the utopian value. To study this point, a general understanding of the consumption value system is needed, and a comparative analysis of the practical value is required. Furthermore, it is necessary to find effective methods of emotional marketing that realize utopian value.

A number of previous studies exist. However, this paper will not stop simply classifying or analyzing each case based on the consumption value system. The originality of this paper is to discuss the theory of consumption value system positively with the concept of storytelling. Storytelling has been recognized as an important tool in communication, and many advertisers have used it. However, there is little discussion about directionality. In addition, when an ad has multiple points of orientation, the effect is distributed because of inconsistent message delivery. Therefore, we will draw conclusions as to which orientation is most ideal for storytelling in advertising.

2. Consumption Value System and Utopian Value

Jean-Marie Floch, who has taken over the tradition of narrative semiotics, has proposed a consumption value system [10]. A commodity has its utopian value in addition to its actual value. The utopia here does not mean fantasy, but ultimate. Consumption can be induced based on these different values. Floch further subdivided the value system of this contradictory consumption through the symbol square model. Figure 1 shows the model proposed by Floch.

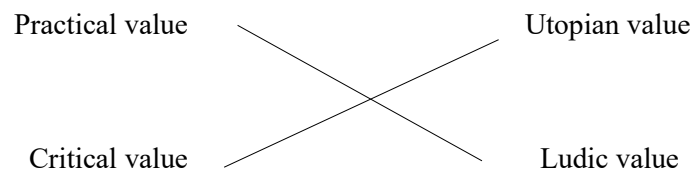


Figure 1. Floch's Consumption value system

Practical value is based on practicality that faithfully fulfills the function of the product. In other words, the value of convenience, safety, comfort, and robustness. This can be regarded as the most primary value and purpose to drive consumption. Motivation caused by deprivation induces consumption based on actual value. The utopian value that is opposite to this is related to the meaning of the individual's life and identity by consuming the product separately from the function of the product. It may be expressed regarding existential value.

What are the critical and ludic values that are in the middle of the two above? The critical value is placed on the same side as it can be categorized as similar to practical value. This refers to quality, price, innovation, and particular functionality. In other words, what kind of benefits can be gained from these points? It critically consumes the products that take precedence over other products. Ludic value includes beauty, sophistication, luxury, etc., which has no use value but is exposed externally. It tells the value that gives the consumer pleasure.

When purchasing a particular product, people do not judge it only by the practical value that is faithful to the purpose of the original use, or with the critical value that is superior to other products in many ways. It is also essential to consider playful values that judge a product regarding aesthetic and entertaining, or utopian values that express their identity through the value or attributes of a specific product.

In his analysis of television commercials for the commercialization of the Citroen BX in 1982, Floch points out that utopian values are realized rather than existing practical values Floch. This ad raises desire for existence, not desire for ownership. However, the ad did not mention the technical characteristics of the car, nor the price, but only showed a red car diving into the sea. However, 50% of the deal was a red car that had never been successful in the French automobile industry until now. It clearly shows that there is a direct link between advertising promotion and sales.

Practical value is the most fundamental driver of consumption. In other words, when the function of a product is required, consumption is performed. Therefore, this is the function of the product itself and the convenience of using the function. Durable and comfortable furniture has high practical value. It is practical that the clothes are lubricious and easy to wash, the bag is durable, and the storage space is plentiful. A practical value for automobiles will be safety, speed, ease of driving, and comfort. The most frequently appearing material in automobile advertising pursuing these values is infants or animals. It is often the case that the driver is running smoothly without awakening the child who is sleeping in the car. In other cases, the ability to operate safely without hurting an animal such as an elk that has suddenly come to the fore can be highlighted.

Critical value focuses on the function of the product itself, similar to practical value. However, it is a value that can be obtained by carefully criticizing the cost, benefit, and quality. And it can generally be obtained through comparison with other products. To reveal this, we must appeal that it has a comparative advantage

and competitiveness in various aspects. Functional products, such as furniture that is foldable, occupy less space or wheels that make it easier to move, can be considered to have this value. Clothing can also be regarded as having critical value if it has merits such as being waterproof well or being able to utilize inside and outside at the same time. In the case of automobiles, competitively priced products such as efficient fuel economy, use of premium parts and price discounts can attract consumers who are based on their critical values. In the case of advertising, the strengths of these comparative advantages are often exposed based on exact figures.

Floch says that she has borrowed the concept of Roger Caillois concerning ludic values, which could be defined as a very free activity. Taking the ad copy of the BMW 3201 as an example, she said that the act of "driving without reason" is an excellent example of realizing playful values. That is, it starts from denying the practical value. Simply aesthetically beautiful, when you buy something to enjoy, you can say that this judgment is based on ludic values.

Utopian values can be understood concerning an individual's identity. The intention is to give a particular meaning to the buyer's identity by consuming certain goods. Or through the consumption of goods, their identity, such as taste or values, may be revealed. It is similar to the process of creating a myth that seeking the identity that he draws through consumption. Therefore, these values are also called mythical values. This is the part of storytelling that we are discussing in this paper is related to the consumption value system. Storytelling marketing provides a myth that a product can transform an individual's identity and realize its ideal value.

3. Analysis of Storytelling Marketing Strategy

Storytelling marketing to emphasize its unique story and mythical meaning, Rather than emphasizing the practical function of the product, faithfully reflects the Dream Society proposal. In the past, many ads emphasized practical value due to material deprivation or poor quality. But now, human desire for matter has been met to some extent globally. Also, due to the developed civilization, the quality was improved to a similar level. Therefore, consumer choice is made emotionally and intuitively rather than by reason and logic.

In this article, I will analyze various consumption values focusing on a coffee advertisement. In particular, by delivering a story, we will concentrate on advertising that appeals to utopian values and discusses the actual impact that it brings. The reasons for choosing the subject of the study as coffee advertising are that it has a great success in Korea in relation to utopian value, so we would like to focus on it. As Maxim TOP is expected to reach 100 billion won in annual sales in 10 years, it has Recently received great attention [11]. It is a representative example of delivering utopian values to many people through emotional marketing based on the love story of a young lover. The sweet romance of the Maxim TOP ad was rated as stimulating a kind of 'coffee fantasy' that was hidden inside customers [12]. This trend of TOP released in 2008 is a milestone in the history of coffee advertising that has been ongoing since the 1980s. Therefore, I think that it is a meaningful research topic to compare and analyze differentiation from the coffee ads which are faithful to the existing practical value.

The practical value of coffee is of course taste and aroma. In the past, typical coffee advertisements usually focused on these practical values. The Coffee Brand of DongSeo Foods Maxim has been trying to convey the concept of 'soft taste and aroma' since the 1980s. In 2010, Maxim's 30th Anniversary Advertisement presented a copy of "The world has become more fragrant thanks to 30 years together." To show the taste and the aroma, the coffee itself and the coffee drink are central to the advertisement.

At the tip of the finger
At the tip of the nose
At the tip of the tongue
Coffee grows at the end of the senses

- Dongseo Food Maxim Coffee Ad(2010)

The most representative model of coffee advertisement in Korea is famous actor Ahn Sung-gi. He has been working on the same brand for over 35 years since 1983. When the public thinks of coffee, his smile with a cup of coffee comes to mind. He made coffee, tasted and smiled in numerous advertisements. The 'soft' flavor of Maxim coffee was expressed through the 'soft' smile of Ahn Sung-gi. The practical value of coffee as a favorite food is related to the relaxation or leisure of life. Through the advertisement of the same actor, Maxim was able to construct meanings such as endless love and comfort. Maxim linked it to the practical value that makes leisure time happier.

Let's take a look at the Maxim White Gold ad (2017) with the concept of "Gently approach and leave a deep scent." A young woman who has just returned home from work is preparing a cup of warm coffee. She spends her own time drawing her cat with soft oil paintings. This narration comes out: "Start, my time. I put down a fine day and fill it with softness. "The advertising model is the world-famous figure star Kim Yeon-ah. She has a passionate and enterprising image, so the rest of the day is sweeter. She is a relaxed look that seems to comfort her life with warm coffee. Here again, the coffee and the milk are mixed, revealing the composition of the coffee itself and the act of the person drinking it.

The coffee brand that represents critical value is the French Cafe. Namyang Dairy, a competing company of Dongseo Food, launched a new French cafe. It has been pointed out that the artificial additive casein sodium has been removed. It was adopted as a model of actor Kim Tae-hee who has a background of Korean representative beauty and a graduate from Seoul National University. It emphasizes the slim body line with the image of a smart consumer who places importance on critical value. Let's look at a copy of the 2018 French Café ad.

This is very selfish.
It's delicious but healthier.
Add non-fat milk instead of casein
Reduced sugar by 25%
Selfish is right for your body

This ad highlights the fact that it has reduced 25% sugar by adding non-fat milk instead of artificial additives. This is the only innovative attempt in Korea to register patents. The French Cafe, which provides the concept of coffee for health, encourages consumers to 'love body project.' It also promotes coffee that is considered not only health but also tastes. This suggests that both critical and practical values have a similar contradiction to utopian values. In the next chapter, I will analyze the case of succeeding in realizing utopian value by connecting coffee with one storytelling.

In 2008, Dongseo Food launched Maxim T.O.P, another brand of Maxim. This is an espresso coffee made with 100% finest Arabica beans that are easy to enjoy. Dongseo Food emphasized the taste and aroma of the coffee that premium coffee gives. However, the advertising communication strategy based on storytelling played a significant role in the success of this brand. TOP stands for The Original Passion for Coffee. At the same time, it reminds us of another meaning of 'best.' In other words, it has a semantic function related to identity. Then I will analyze how the new coffee brand made a positive impression on the public.

The research subjects were from Episode 1 to 5 (2009-2010) "About Real Espresso" which was designed to announce the espresso coffee at the beginning of the launch. Let's take a look at episode 1 that marked the naming of TOP.

Woman: TOP? What is a real espresso?
Man : (Kiss on the forehead) If this is just coffee,
(Kiss on lips) This is TOP.

At the end of the advertisement comes a copy of "Enjoy Deeply" along with the caption "Brewed coffee enjoyed by espresso." Through Deep Kiss, this meant to convey the meaning of 'deep' and 'dark.' This is not about the taste and flavor of coffee but the concentration of emotions of love. In other words, the passion for espresso, which is also revealed in naming, is replaced by the passion for love. Here is the myth of TOP. Lovers

would give and take not just coffee, but the TOP, a medium filled with deep, deep love. What is essential at this time is the connotation of deep love, not a denotation of espresso coffee.

Episode 2 and Episode 3 are variations on the extension of the Deep Kiss episode plus seasonal sensations. Each of them contains a picnic on a field covered with leaves and a walk in a snowy forest. Here again, 'Fall like just coffee/fall like TOP' and 'lukewarm just coffee / hot TOP' contrast. In winter, however, the copy was transformed into "enjoy it hot" instead of "enjoy deeply." In this series of advertisements, the comparisons between just coffee and TOP have become even more pronounced, spreading the different myths of TOP.

The most popular of these ad series is Episode IV. This was an opportunity to impress people with TOP images. It is based on the triangle of lovers and provides a dramatic story. The man says, "If you were just coffee, this girl is my TOP." This word became a buzzword at the time and produced many parodies. In episode 2, he said, "If I just look at TOP, I think of you." In this episode, TOP is finally compared to a lover. This touches the issue of identity. Here TOP conveys the meaning of 'best' with the value of passion that has been formed in the meantime.

Now for lovers TOP coffee is a tool that defines the identity of an ideal partner beyond deep, deep love. The illusion of perfect love is realized this way. The BGM used in this ad series is Reality, the OST of the famous French film *La Boum*. Korean singer Park Hye-kyung called it. The lyrics from the kiss scene are "Dreams are my reality. The only kind of real fantasy". This is an excellent example of what the TOP would appeal to in this ad series. It is to make the dream of love, not taste and smell of coffee as a favorite food. This is the utopian value realized through the story.

4. Conclusion

There are thousands of ads people see in a day. Among them, very few are left in our memory. To do this, it is necessary to stimulate emotions and imagination through stories rather than realistic information-oriented ads. Storytelling can be used not only for marketing a single product or brand but also for promoting the corporate image. The Dream Society values spiritual values, so it is critical that the values that companies pursue. Here, the story of the company, including the story of the founder, is essential. Therefore, storytelling can be used in various ways in business. It is possible to imagine a business model that delivers the utopian value by expanding from individual products to brand and corporate image.

If we communicate utopian values to consumers through various stories, business effects will be maximized, which will strengthen the brand image. Especially useful media is SNS. Stories that stimulate people's emotions have significant impacts, creating spontaneous word of mouth. Understanding these business models will help you build an effective marketing strategy for the Dream Society. The question is what kind of storytelling to put into the product than the product itself.

References

- [1] Choi, Hye Sil, *Cultural Contents Meet Storytelling*, Samsung Economic Research Institute, p.28, 2006.
- [2] Kim, Jeong Hee, *What is storytelling*, Communication Books, pp.3-4, 2014.
- [3] Salmon, Christian, *Storytelling: Bewitching the Modern Mind*, Verso, p.5, 2010.
- [4] Lee, Y. s. and Shin, W. j., "Marketing tradition-bound products through storytelling: a case study of a Japanese sake brewery," *Service Business*, Vol. 9, No. 2, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11628-013-0227-5> , 2015.
- [5] Gilliam, D. A., and Flaherty, K. E., "Storytelling by the sales force and its effect on buyer-seller exchange," *Industrial marketing management*, Vol. 46, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.indmarman.2015.01.013>, 2015.
- [6] Mancuso, J. and Stuth, K., "Storytelling and Marketing," *Marketing Insights*, Vol. 26, No. 3, 2014.
- [7] Jensen, Rolf, *Dream Society: How the Coming Shift from Information to Imagination Will Transform Your Business*, McGraw-Hill, 2001.
- [8] Roberts, Kevin, *Lovemarks: The Future Beyond Brands*, Powerhouse Books, 2004.

- [9] Lee, Chang Yong, *The Power of Story*, Gold Fish Books, pp.271-273, 2011.
- [10] Floche, Jean-Marie, *Semiotics, Marketing, and Communication: Beneath the Signs, the Strategies*, trans. Robin Orr Bodkin, Palgrave Macmillan, 2001.
- [11] *Herald Economy*, <http://news.heraldcorp.com/view.php?ud=20180725000211>.
- [12] *Korea Economy* , <http://news.hankyung.com/article/2010121986471?nv=o>.