

Ads Content Analysis Form

Instructions

Fill out one form per ad.

Below you will find definitions of each of the questions and how to answer them.

Ad ID

Total of 12 digits: newspaper code – date – ad number (xxx-xxxxxx-xxx)

Newspaper code: Three digits.

For example, 108.

Date: Six digits.

For example, September 16, 2002 is 091602.

Ad number: Three digits.

Ads numbered on copy of newspaper.

For example, 074.

The correct Ad ID in this example is: 108-091602-074

Coder

Coder ID number.

Key words in ad

Write key words in the ad for easy identification.

Front page of section

Mark (1) if the ad appears on the front page of a section, (2) if it doesn't.

Section

Mark the section that the ad appears in from the list below using the appropriate number. A section is a stand-alone entity, not just a themed page. Be careful *not* to confuse the *ad's content* with the *section in which it appears*. (Note: you can modify this list to reflect your newspaper specifically.) See Quick Reference Code List for section codes.

Above fold

The fold is the mid-point of the newspaper page vertically (i.e., separates top from bottom).

Mark (1) if the ad is placed above the fold (or the top half of the page) (2) if is not.

Size

What is the most appropriate size of the ad relative to the size of the page?

Mark (1) if the ad is a full page or more, (2) if the ad is $\frac{1}{2}$ page to a full page, (3) if the ad is $\frac{1}{4}$ page to $\frac{1}{2}$ page and (4) if the ad is $\frac{1}{4}$ page or less.

New Readers Project

Ad Format

There are two choices: Display Advertising and Classified Advertising.

Display Advertising is printed advertising that depends upon a variety of visual and copy elements to present the message. It is defined by a border. Most of the ads you code will be display ads.

Classifieds advertising typically consists of one-column ads that are placed in the classified section of the paper and run without borders. While ads in the Classifieds section are not included in this study, we did include classified ads outside the Classifieds section. They are to be coded as one ad.

Mark (1) if the ad is a display ad, and (2) if the ad is a classified ad.

Ad Type

About 90% of the ads in a newspaper sell or promote products or services. *Products* are defined as tangible goods such as clothes, food, loans, and furniture but also movies, basketball games and other entertainment. *Services* are defined as non-tangible goods such as education, legal advice and financial advice.

A smaller number of ads are announcements of meetings open to the public (e.g., city council, a rally, a lecture). These meetings may or may not be designed to enhance sales (e.g., book signing by an author). They should be coded as *events*. These ads offer you to go to a certain place at a certain time, ask that you be somewhere. This can be for a meeting or a seminar, but also for a grand opening of a store, or a book signing.

Fewer ads are used to make a public statement by corporations, public institutions or private people. A *position statement* refers to an institution, group or individual's public announcement about a public matter. For example, a lobbying group making the case against a new health care policy, or a university publishing its union agreement. Another example may be the government sponsoring an anti-smoking campaign (a PSA). A *personal message* refers to ads that publish an institution's, group's or individual's public announcement about a private matter. Examples include a sympathy ad from the store where the deceased worked or congratulating a couple for their 50th anniversary as well as death and legal notices.

Mark (1) if the ad sells or promotes a product or service, (2) if the ad promotes or calls an event, (3) if the ad publishes a position statement on a public matter, (4) if the ad publishes a personal message, and (99) if the ad doesn't fit the above categories. For example, ads recruiting people for clinical trials or other studies (please specify on the coding sheet how you would characterize this ad).

Ad Category

The categories we have listed are primarily goods (tangible and non-tangible). All ads selling or promoting products, services or events can be categorized. In most cases, positions statement and personal message ads can also be categorized according to this list. Mark (99) if the ad doesn't fit the above categories (please specify on the coding sheet how you would characterize this ad).

New Readers Project

See Quick Reference Code List for category codes and appendix at the end for more details.

Ad Technique

Ads fall into two categories. Some ads give you very specific, concrete information you need to make a transaction (usually to buy something or go somewhere). They'll tell you *how* by focusing on a product, giving you a price, telling you there's a sale going on, telling you how to buy tickets, where to go and what time it starts. The ads have a direct benefit to you; they are useful. Examples include Marshall Field's 13-hour sale.

Other ads are designed to sell you an image. They often don't specify product information, list a price, give a street address, or tell you that you have to hurry to get it while supply lasts. These ads try to sell you an idea, the concept of the brand – these ads focus on *why* you should buy but they don't directly ask you to do anything. They may try to appeal to an emotional need you have or to present a solution to a problem. Think of VW ads on TV.

Mark (1) if it is a how ad and (2) if it is a why ad.

Use of Color

Is the printed in ad black and white, or is it in color?

Mark (1) if the ad is B&W, (2) if there's one additional color and (3) if there are two or more additional colors.

Check List Items

For the checklist items you need to mark (1) "yes" if they appear in the ad and (2) "no" if they do not appear in the ad.

Promotion Device

- **Price Reduction / Sale** – Mention of reduced prices or a general sale. Includes sales, % off, savings of \$, lower price for limited time, "\$\$\$ back" (which may also be coded as rebate), "buy one get one free."
- **Non-Commercial Event Promotion** – Mention of a non-commercial event such as a town hall meeting or public rally. For a book signing event you can put "no" (2) for non-commercial event because the intent is to promote and sell the book, but for a meeting with the mayor you can put "yes" (1) for non-commercial event.
- **Technical / Description** – Technical or descriptive text about the product/ service/ event and its qualities.
- **Competitive Comparison** – text comparing the features product/ service/ event to another specific product/ service/ event.
- **Narrative story** – Text telling a story in which the product/ service/ event may or may not feature. The story is not *about* the product (that would be technical / description). Includes "before and after" photos or illustrations (they tell a story) and testimonials

New Readers Project

- **Contest/ Raffle/ Draw** – Mention of a possibility to win a prize. Includes auctions.
- **Free Gift** – Mention of a free gift. Has to be an actual gift (with purchase, registration, etc.) not free shipping or registration. Does NOT include free estimate / delivery / shipment / registration / inspection / demonstration / “buy 1 get 1 free.”
- **Coupon** – Ad includes a coupon or a “mention this ad to get discount”.
- **Prices listed** – Ad includes a price. Includes \$, \$/month, \$/x months, rates (APR, APY)

Time factor

- **Limited Offer** – Text indicating that a sale / promotion is limited in time (e.g., “One day only,” “Sale ends Monday”). The limit is on the action of the consumer. Does not apply to events that happen on a certain date (e.g., a hockey game, a concert).

Contact information

- **Street Address** – Ad includes a street address.
- **Local?** – Is the street address provided local?
- **Phone / Fax** – Ad includes a telephone and / or fax number.
- **Local?** – Is the phone / fax number provided local? Any 800 or 900 number is not considered local
- **Web Address** – Ad includes a URL or Web address.

Photo / Illustration

- **Logo** – Ad includes a photo / illustration of the company or product logo (a specially designed name or symbol of a company or product used as a trademark in advertising and other communications).
- **Product** – Ad includes a photo / illustration of the product. Includes photos of people in movies, theater, musical shows, clubs of all kind.
- **People** – Ad includes a photo / illustration of people.

Language

- **Spanish Language** – Ad includes a word or a phrase in Spanish, or the ad is entirely in Spanish. Includes “Se Habla Espanol.” Exclude names of people, places or food.
- **1st or 2nd Person** – Ad includes the words “I,” “me,” “we,” “our,” “you,” “you’re,” or “yours”.

Demographic Focus

Determine if the ad is focused on one of the following groups: African-American/ Black, Latin/ Hispanic, Asian-American/ Asian, Women, Youth/ Young adults.

The question to ask is: Is the race/ ethnicity, the age or the gender of the people/ places/ events presented a focus of the ad? (not necessarily THE focus but A focus)

New Readers Project

Some rules of thumb:

- The ad explicitly refers to ethnic minorities/ women/ young people as beneficiaries of the product/ service/ event. For example, an ad saying “serving the Hispanic community for over 20 years.”
- The ad explicitly refers to ethnic minorities/ women/ young people as a target audience for the product/ service/ event. For example, an ad saying “We know what your teenager needs – buy X.”
- A photo/ illustration is not enough! A photo of an African-American couple at a bank does not qualify as demographic focus.
- If more than one category is applicable, give priority in this order:
 - Age (if 34 and under)
 - Race / Ethnicity (if African American, Hispanic, or Asian)
 - Gender (if women)

Mark 1 – 5 to indicate which group the ad is focused on. Mark 98 if the ad does not have a demographic focus and 99 if it has a strong focus on another group not listed above.

Additional Number of Ads on Page

Count how many other ads appear on the same page as the ad you coded. Mark the *additional* number of ads, excluding the one you are coding.

Person #

If people are shown in the ad (either in photo or illustration), each person should be coded. A person is coded as such if you can see a face (i.e., hands and other body parts do not count as a person).

In case of a group shot in which there are more than ten people you can clearly identify, code the ten most prominent ones.

For each person you will need to record gender, capacity, race/ ethnicity and age, based on *reasonable assumptions*. Don't over-analyze; think of how a typical person would see these people and what sort of attributions a typical person would make about gender, age, and race/ ethnicity. Obviously, if there are hints in the text of the ad, use them for coding.

You have the option of coding (98) if you cannot tell a person's gender, capacity, race/ ethnicity or age.

Gender

Identify each person as male or female when possible.

Mark (1) if the person is female, (2) if male, (98) if can't tell.

Capacity

Refers to the type of person and their role in the ad. Each person should be classified as one of the following:

1. **Ordinary Person:** People like you and me, people who don't represent an organization, ordinary people doing ordinary everyday things. Includes people who *look* like ordinary people but may be professional models.

New Readers Project

2. **Official:** Elected and government officials or **quasi-officials** (e.g., Sierra Club spokesperson, school principal, program director). Also includes political leaders (unelected, e.g., Jesse Jackson), business leaders, religious leaders and sports teams' coaches and owners etc.
3. **Celebrity:** Members of the entertainment industry, professional athletes, including well-recognized professional models. Also includes actors shown in movie, theater or other entertainment ads.

98. **Can't tell**

99. **Other:** Can't fit into any of above categories. Avoid as much as possible.

Race / Ethnicity

Refers to the person's race or ethnicity. Identify race or ethnicity from photos, explicit mentions in the text, or general knowledge.

Mark 1 – 4 to indicate which group the person in the ad belongs to, mark (98) if you can't tell the person's race/ ethnicity.

See Quick Reference Code List for codes.

Age

Refers to the person's age in years. Identify age from photos, explicit mentions in the text, or general knowledge (e.g., if the story mentions a child, it's OK to infer he is under 18).

Mark 1 – 3 to indicate which age group the person in the ad belongs to, mark (98) if you can't tell the person's age.

See Quick Reference Code List for codes.

Local

Indicates whether the person shown in the ad is identified in the ad as a local person. There are two conditions under which you code a person as local:

- There is an *explicit* mention in the ad that a person lives on a local street, that they are the owner of a local business, or they are part of a local organization or business. For example, "John Doe owner of the Main Street Bakery can't live without his cell phone."
- It is general enough knowledge that *anyone* would know this without being an expert. For example, if you are coding the Chicago Tribune and there's a pizza ad with Oprah in it, it is safe to say most people would consider her a local Chicago person.

Mark (1) if the person is identified as local and (2) if not.

Headline Effectiveness

The *headline* of the ad is the top text. It is typically in bigger, bolder font, and not very long.

New Readers Project

Effectiveness is defined as “the ability to clearly and quickly communicate the point of the ad to the reader.” An effective headline is,

- Concise
- Clear
- Visually interesting

Here we want your judgment about how effective the headline is.

Rate how much you agree that the headline is effective using a scale from 1-5, where,

“1” is strongly disagree,

“2” is disagree,

“3” is neither agree nor disagree,

“4” is agree and

“5” is strongly agree

Reliability coder

Mark (1) if the promotion is coded for a reliability test, (2) if it isn't.

Appendix: Ad Category Notes

1. Apparel (including shoes)
2. Appliances (washing machines, toasters)
3. Auto (cars, car parts, shops)
4. Department Stores (for multiple categories, Marshall Field's, Macy's; also includes services within stores such as JC Penny Optical)
5. Discount Stores (for multiple categories, Target, Walmart, K-Mart)
6. Education (schools, classes, courses)
7. Electronics (TV, radio, DVD players)
8. Entertainment (movies, theater, night clubs, casinos, gentleman's clubs)
9. Financial (insurance, banks, loans)
10. Food/ Groceries (supermarkets, grocery stores, alcohol/ tobacco)
11. Furniture
12. Home Improvement (building materials, supplies, accessories, rugs; also includes landscaping and gardening)
13. Issues (refers to ads taken out to promote or state a position on an issue – political, social, economic – not a product. Examples of such issues include health care policy, Supreme Court decisions regarding church & state or the war in Iraq.)
14. Medicine & Health (pharmaceuticals, hospitals, procedures, health insurance, diet, wellness spa)
15. Restaurants (including catering)
16. Music (events, concerts, live performances, CDs)
17. Non-profit (refers to ads taken out by non-profit organizations that are not selling something in the traditional way. They are working for a cause, not for profit. Examples include the Salvation Army, Purple Heart, The Ford Foundation, religious institutions/ services, ads for volunteering, donating)
18. Personal accessories (cosmetic products, jewelry, watches)
19. Real Estate (rent/ sale)
20. Social (relationships, dating)
21. Sports (sports events, sporting goods, fitness clubs, country clubs)
 201. Baseball
 202. Basketball
 203. Football
 204. Hockey
 205. Soccer
 206. Outdoor Recreational (e.g., Marathon, Fishing, Hunting)

New Readers Project

- 298. General
- 299. Other
- 22. Telecommunications (phone, wireless, cable, satellite, DirecTV)
- 23. Travel (airlines, hotels, destination such as Disney World, Hong Kong or a horse ranch)
- 99. Other