



Selling the Dream: Why Advertising Is Good Business

John M. Hood

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The process of producing goods and services is relatively easy to recognize as socially beneficial. But television ads? Telemarketers? Jingles? Junk mail? It is popular to view these commercial activities as inherently wasteful or manipulative, marginally informative or entertaining, at best. In *Selling the Dream*, John Hood takes the provocative stand that advertising images and sales pitches are actually part of the goods and services themselves, delivering an essential component of the consumer's experience. As such, they are inextricably linked to the basic tenets of the free-market system, and, in the boldest of terms, Hood argues that commercial communication is morally consistent with the principles of our democratic society, including freedom of choice, competition, and innovation. Tracing the history of advertising from Ancient Roman times to the present, he offers a colorful account of advertising in its cultural context and addresses such controversial issues as the promotion of harmful and immoral products (such as alcohol and tobacco), marketing to children, the role of advertising in service industries such as health care and education, and the impact of the Internet and other new media on the conduct of commerce. In the process, he offers a compelling perspective on advertising and its essential role in business, communication, and popular culture.

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