



The Use of Caricatures as a Means of Advertising: The Case of Sūtaş

Gūldane Zengin

Selçuk Üniversitesi, Turkey

guldanezengin@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Advertisers often make use of humorous elements in advertisements they create. Advertisements that contain such elements play a great role in creating awareness and attaining positive attitudes. Caricature, which is an element of humor, is interesting, eye catching, entertaining and memorable by its very nature. Because of these characteristics of caricatures, they are being used for advertising purposes. Advertisements with caricatures are spreading rapidly and embraced by consumers easily. Especially in the last ten years, companies in different sectors use advertisements with caricatures to publicize their products and services. These companies have different target audiences with different characteristics. They all have differences in opinions, attitudes, perceptions and buying behaviors. Target audiences' brand choices depend on many different factors. Advertising is an important factor in brand choice. Using attention grabbing methods like advertising with caricatures affects their buying behaviors. This study examines the use of caricatures in Sūtaş advertisements. Target audiences' opinions, perceptions and attitudes about advertisements with caricatures are examined in this descriptive study.

Keywords: Advertising, Advertisements with caricatures, Caricature, Communication, Humor, Sūtaş caricatures.

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INTRODUCTION

Caricatures are a product of humor, and they have been used in various forms through the centuries. Caricatures can be seen as cave drawings, paintings on vases and jugs, or as sculptures. Caricature met with the art of painting as time passed, and become



widespread when printing press was invented. This allowed caricatures to be a tool for representing social phenomena, as well as cultural and social values. While the art of caricature emerged late in Turkey, its development was fast. . By the way, In Europe and the United States, the word caricature is used to define exaggerated portraits mostly. However, caricature is something similar to comics for the Turkish consumer.

Caricatures were the inspiration for various fields, and one of them is the advertising field. Advertising professionals are good at making use of interesting tools, and they are using caricatures too. There are sound reasons for using caricatures as a means of advertising. Caricatures not only make people laugh, but also grab the attention of them, gain their interest and get recalled by them. Caricatures can be surprising or shocking, while being informative and enlightening (Özer, 1986:94). In this context, it can be said that it is also an effective way of advertising.

There are many attempts made by organizations to use caricatures as a means of advertising. One of those organizations is Süttaş, which is a major producer of dairy products in Turkey. Süttaş targets the youth with its advertising campaigns, and uses caricatures in many ways to reach its target audience. Süttaş caricatures are published in Hürriyet daily newspaper, featured in product packages, and even displayed in special parts of shopping malls. In this study, the attitudes of youth toward these caricatures are analyzed.

CARICATURE

Caricature is the art of converting the extraordinary and conflicting aspects of feelings, ideas, events or people to drawings in a humorous way. Caricatures may sometimes be aided with text (Fidan, 2007:39). Caricature can be consumed by readers of every age. Caricatures are entertaining, humorous, satirical, and they also make people think. They help in transferring the messages while making the messages permanent in the receivers mind (Uğurelve Moralı, 2005:2). In addition to this, caricature is named as "graphical humor" nowadays (Fidan, 2007:39). Because in time it get simpler and obtained a graphical order. Graphical approach can only be attained by caricatures without text (Balcıoğlu, 1987:10).

HISTORY OF CARICATURE

The old cave paintings are regarded as caricatures (Özer, 1985:5-6). There are many examples of caricatures in ancient Egypt. Many humor historians pointed hieroglyphs as the beginning of caricature (Selçuk, 1997:7). In the ruins of Pompei and Herculeneum, it is found that the faces of enemies are deformed intentionally in the wall and vase



paintings. This is the foundation of portrait caricatures. Similar portrait caricatures can be seen in Rome, China and ancient Greece. First drawn stories are found in Egypt and India (Kar, 1999:25).

When printing press is invented, caricatures started to become widespread. Printing press helped people to create hundreds of copies of one caricature. The first example of this belongs to Leonardo da Vinci (Özer, 1985:6). Caricature was accepted as an art form in 17th century in Italy. Italians named the portraits of people in which head is replaced with animal heads as "caricatura". In England, the democratic regime let free press, and this led to the rise of caricature as an art (Özer, 1985:7). 1830 was an important year for this new art form, since the political satire newspaper "La Caricatura" was published in France. The first caricature in this newspaper belongs to French painter Charles Philipon (Topuz, 1997:51). In this era, caricature became a way of affecting global politics. Philipon used caricature as a political weapon against the French king Louis-Philippe. However, this led to a ban on caricatures. French king banned "expressing ideas with drawings". Authorities stated that in a population where half of the people are illiterate, caricature is stronger than words. In the end, La Caricature was closed (McKee, 2002:6). The development of the art of caricature did not stop. Caricatures started to feature text and became narrative pieces. The exaggerated drawings of people became an art form of its own (Özer, 1985:7).

DEVELOPMENT OF CARICATURE IN TURKEY

Turkey was late to embrace caricatures. First steps were taken in 19th century. First printed caricature belongs to Arif Arifaki and featured in an İstanbul newspaper in 1867. There were 20-25 caricatures in this newspaper (Topuz, 1997:211). First humor magazine was named as "Diyojen" and it was published by Teodor Kasap in 1870. The caricatures in this newspaper were not signed by their artists, thus it is not possible to identify who drew them (Balçioğlu, 1987:5).

The journey of caricature was happening on a bumpy road. 1960s were not active years for caricaturists. The reason behind this was caricature magazines decreasing sales. Caricature magazines were focusing on universal tragedies of human life in these years. They were not publishing a lot of caricatures on political subjects (Sipahioğlu, 1999:130). Turkish caricature was 100 years old in 1970s. In these years, universal caricature understanding was established, and the success of Turkish caricature was recognized. Caricature artists also created their association in this era (Saydut, 2006, <http://www.mizahvecizgi.com>, 31.01.2009). The first years of the 80s were very inactive for caricaturists, since there was a military coup in Turkey (Öngören, 1998:120).



Caricature continued its development in 1990s. Leman magazine was started its life in this era and became the most read magazine, not only among the caricature magazines, but also in all types of magazines sold. Leman became a synonym for caricature magazine (Hoşafçı, 2006:107). Through the 2000s, popular culture affected caricature in a way that questioning, thinking and universal humor ideas are left for instantaneous entertainment. Although such caricatures exist, number of magazines sold is more important than before (Kaptan, 2004).

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CARICATURE AND ADVERTISING

Advertising is a communication process and the message is coded to be transferred. While transferring the message, semiology is put into use. It can be said that one of the signs is caricature. The reason behind using caricature in advertising is creating a humorous communication style which integrates well with the brand. Caricature is an art form that is found interesting and embraced by the society. Caricature helps advertising to occupy a strong place in consumers mind and it can be effective in the purchase decision process (Fidan, 2007:14).

The aim of advertising is to inform the unaware consumer about the product; or get the aware consumer to the point of purchasing the product by making it appealing. Using caricature as a means of advertising is an important factor in creating word of mouth (Özer, 1985:80). Advertising professionals often select a caricature artist who is well known by the society. It is important to select someone whose style of drawing can be recognized by society to be able to gain positive results from the advertising campaign (Kar, 1999:134).

Advantages of using caricature in advertising can be listed as (Fidan, 2007:149):

- Helps in expressing the message.
- Strengthens the message.
- Grabs the attention of the viewer, wherever it is positioned in the page.
- It is striking and it has a high potential to surprise the viewer.
- It can represent the message in ways that photos can't.
- It can express tough messages in a softer way.
- Caricatures are loved by almost everybody.
- Has a high potential to stay in the mind of the target audience.
- It is an effective way of word-of-mouth communication.

Using caricatures in advertising may also lead to some disadvantages (Özer, 1994:26):

- May dilute the message.



- May make the message less believable.
- If the advertising message and caricature does not match, it can have adverse effects.
- May have negative effects on the reputation of the advertiser.

Organizations are hesitating to use caricatures in advertising because it is important to adjust the dosage of advertising messages in such caricatures. Unqualified artists can create caricatures that are featuring high dosage of commercial messages and this can be damaging to the brand (Altun, 2008: 64).

METHODOLOGY

In this study, youths attitudes, views and perceptions toward Süttaş's caricatures was analyzed. Süttaş, which is a dairy producer in Turkey, is using caricatures in its advertisements since the year 2002.

There are many organizations that are using caricatures in their advertising campaigns. This study is limited to the advertisements' of Süttaş. The field study is limited to the students of Selçuk University, in the city of Konya. The questionnaire form was pre-tested on 20 participants and corrections are made according to the feedback received. The final questionnaire forms are distributed to female and male students, who were studying in various degrees of undergraduate and graduate programs. Out of the 465 questionnaire forms, 445 were usable. The rest were not used because of incomplete answers.

The questionnaire form consists of 46 questions. First five questions are intended to gain information about the participants demographic profile. Following nine questions are asked to learn about the participants degree of involvement with caricatures. 25 of the questions are in Likert scale: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Undecided, Agree, Strongly Agree. There are also questions to assess the degree of awareness about the use caricatures as a means of advertising.

Findings

Out of the 445 participants, 51,2% of the participants were female, while 48,8% were male. 63,16% of the participants are aged between 20 and 22. Most of them (92,4%) are single. 75,5% have up to 500 Turkish Liras for spending every month.

Most of the participants (66,8%) do not have a tendency to buy caricature magazines and the participants who read caricatures are a minority (68,3%) among the general sample. In spite of this, there is no negative attitude toward caricatures. Most of the



participants read caricatures from newspapers (46.7%). The least used medium for reading caricatures is the internet (16,6%). This leads to low rates of sharing caricatures on the internet (10,5%). Most of the participants (62,3%) also does not have a favorite caricaturist who they follow routinely. However, 60,5% of the participants stated that they were verbally sharing the stories told in caricatures with their friends and family. It can be said that the participants are not necessarily interested in caricatures, but if a caricature captures their attention and liked by them, they have a tendency to talk about it.

There are various organizations that are using caricatures in their advertisements. Ten of those organizations are listed and participants are asked to select the ones they remember. There was also an "other" option if participants thought they can recall another organization that uses caricatures. The results suggests that Süttaş is the most remembered organization (23,70%), while Turkcell takes the second place (18,40%) and Avea comes third (17,90%). It was interesting to see that some of the participants filled the open-ended "other" option with the names of the firms that does not have caricatures in their advertisements, like Fanta, Redbull, World Card, Albeni and Adidas. These brands do not feature caricatures but they have animated advertisements. It can be said that some of the participants have confusion about the scope of caricatures.

Brands	F	%
Avea	206	17,9
İş Bankası	60	5,2
Kalekilit	14	1,2
Marsa	63	5,5
OK	70	6,1
Petrol Ofisi	65	5,6
Süttaş	273	23,7
Turkcell	212	18,4
Vodafone	115	10
Yeni Rakı	54	4,7
Garanti Bankası	3	0,3
Vestel	1	0,1
Fanta	3	0,3
Eti	3	0,3



Adidas	2	0,2
Albeni	2	0,2
World Card	3	0,3
Milka	2	0,2
Redbull	1	0,1
Total	1152	100

To be able to reveal the most read caricature magazine among the participants, a question which lists seven caricature magazines was asked. Most read magazine was Penguen (32,23%) while Lemana (17,97%) comes after that and Uykusuz (14,84%) follows them. There was an open-ended question which required the participants to write their favorite caricature artists. The top three names written were Salih Memecan (17,74%), Yiğit Özgür (8,87%) and Dağıştan Çekinkaya (6,45%). As stated earlier, the preferred medium for the participants to read caricatures are newspapers. To the question which was asked to reveal the names of these newspapers, 25,60% of the participants replied "Sabah", 16,67% replied "Zaman", 11,31% replied Hürriyet and 35,41% replied with the names of other newspapers. These results are related to each other. Salih Memecan, who is the favorite caricaturist among the participants, works in Sabah newspaper, which is the newspaper where most of the participants prefer for reading caricatures. Yiğit Özgür is works in Uykusuz magazine and Dağıştan Çetinkaya works in Zaman newspaper. In addition to this, when asked about which internet sites they prefer for reading caricatures, the participants replied with Facebook, Penguen website and Uykusuz website.

When asked about which brands they recall when they hear the word "cow", Süttaş came first (44,46%). Süttaş is followed by Milka (24,57%) and Pınar (7,09%). It can be said that a firm link between cow and Süttaş is established. In general, the recalled brands are about dairy, chocolate and red meat.

According to the findings, the caricatures on product packaging (79,4%), in newspapers (69,9%) and on the internet(58%) draw the attention of the participants. However, they are not eager to advice the products that were advertised with caricatures. They also do not share such caricatures with their friends. In addition to this, the participants are undecided (35,3%) if they would buy a product because of its caricature advertising. The participants do not think that caricature advertising is boring (67,7%). They stated that advertisements with caricatures stay longer in their minds (55,9%). Such advertisements help them identify brands in store shelves (54,6%), and it also makes



them curious about the brand (46,3%). On the other hand, participants stated that their ideas about the brands do not change because of caricature advertising. However they were undecided, if brand become more friendly if they use caricatures. It can be said that the participants' purchase decisions are not affected by the use of caricatures in advertisements.

	SD	D	N	A	SA
The caricatures that are printed on product packages grabs my attention	5,2	7,4	7,9	47,9	31,5
Using caricatures in advertising affects my purchase decision about the product positively	14,6	23,6	35,3	19,8	6,5
When reading a newspaper, advertisements with caricatures grabs my attention	5,8	7,9	15,7	51	0,7
When browsing the internet, advertisements with caricatures grabs my attention	9,2	11,2	20	43,4	14,6
I share caricature advertising with my friends.	15,7	27,6	22,2	23,4	10,3
Advertisements with caricatures are boring	33,3	34,4	19,6	8,3	4
I don't read advertisements with caricatures.	36,9	38,7	11,9	8,5	2,9
I can recall advertisements with caricatures more easily.	8,5	10,8	24,5	38,4	17,5
I can easily recognize the brands that make advertisements with caricatures	8,5	13,5	22,9	42	12,6
Advertisements with caricatures makes me curious about the product	9,9	16,9	26,3	36,4	9,9

The participants' attitudes toward Süttaş's advertisements with caricatures are tested by eleven questions. Participants stated that they did not encounter these advertisements in newspapers (52,5%). It can be said that this result is expected, since advertisements were only appeared in Hürriyet newspaper. Also they did not see these advertisements on the internet (46,1%), They did not like to share both on the internet(58,7%) and verbally (48,8%). On the other hand, participants stated that they saw caricatures on the product packages (56,2%), and they also stated that they read these caricatures. They think that the caricatures are funny (45,9%), but they do not know the artists names (69,2%). In addition to this, the participants stated that their purchase decisions are not affected by Süttaş caricatures (58,7%). It can be said that the use of caricatures as a means of advertising for Süttaş products affects the participants' ideas, attitudes and perceptions positively, although they do not have direct effect on purchase.



	SD	D	N	A	SA
I noticed Süttaş's advertisements with caricatures in the newspapers	21,3	31,2	18,2	21,8	7,2
I come across Süttaş's advertisements with caricatures on the internet	17,1	29	20,2	25,6	7,6
I share Süttaş's advertisements with caricatures with my friends	28,1	30,6	21,8	15,3	4
The caricatures on SüttaşAyran's packaging grabs my attention	12,8	13	17,5	41,1	15,1
I don't like caricatures on SüttaşAyran's packaging	20,7	32,6	28,5	11,9	5,8
When I purchase SüttaşAyran, I read the caricatures on the packaging	11,9	19,3	17,5	35,5	14,8
I know the names of caricaturists who draw Süttaş's caricatures	37,5	31,7	12,6	12,4	5,6
Süttaş caricatures makes me buy Süttaş products	27,4	32,4	22,7	13,3	3,8
I think the caricatures on SüttaşAyran packaging are funny	11,5	15,5	27	35,3	10,6
Süttaş caricatures does not affect my product preferences	11,7	15,1	25,6	31,9	15,3
I show caricatures that are printed on SüttaşAyran's packaging to my friends	25,4	23,4	20,2	23,4	7,6
The caricatures on SüttaşAyran's packaging make me buy SüttaşAyran	31,5	27,2	22,2	13	6,1

CONCLUSION

Using caricatures as a means of advertising is a new way of advertising for the firms in a time where mass communication vehicles are developing and becoming widespread. The use of caricatures are getting popular, because caricatures target every type of people, and it features humor which helps in transferring messages to the reader. Advertising creates identification, brand image and it leaves traces in the consumer mind. It is not by chance that advertising and caricature met. Many organizations are using caricatures for advertising. Süttaş is also one of those organizations who are using caricatures in advertisements, newspapers, and web sites and on product packages.

In this study, it is found that the participants' attitudes toward caricature are positive, but they are not avid followers. They are sharing the caricatures with friends and family if



they like it. The most remembered brand that takes advantage of caricatures is Süttaş. A long-term campaign like Süttaş's may have positive effects on this finding.

According to the study, while participants are active about sharing caricatures, their attitudes on caricature advertising is on the negative side. However they also stated that they share advertising they like with friends and family. It may be helpful to work with popular caricature artists and select popular newspapers. Süttaş uses talking cows in most of their advertising campaigns. When asked about which brand the word "cow" evokes in their minds, Süttaş was the top result. This shows that cows must also be a part of their caricature advertising campaigns. The participants do not think that caricature advertising is boring. These advertisements aid in identifying brands in the shelves, but they are not very effective on the purchase decision. In addition, the participants stated that they read the caricatures on the product packages and share them with their friends. The use of caricatures as a means of advertising has a supportive role for brands. Especially product packaging is a good medium for caricatures.

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