



The Mass Desire,
Not The Copy,
Makes Advertising Work

Elizabeta Kuzevska



Eugene M. Schwartz explains that the mass desire, not the copy, makes advertising work in Breakthrough Advertising.

As copywriters and advertisers, we can't create mass desire. Our job is with our copies and ads to channel people's wishes, hopes, dreams into a particular product.

The entrepreneur can't produce and promote something without prior market research. That is why everything starts with mass desire. If they produce something no one wants, they will fail because there is no desire for that product/service.

On the other side, if there is a massive desire (for example, for mobile phones), mobile advertisers' and companies' job is to find a way to produce or find something better than the competition they can use in their ads and channel desire towards their phones.

The first step a copywriter must take is to have an understanding of what the general public wants.

What Is This Mass Desire—and How Is It Created?

Mass desire is “the public spread of a private want”, It is the desire that many people have. They are willing to pay to satisfy it. The copywriter needs to address their ads to these people, and their advertising depends on them. If they use this desire correctly, they can earn a lot with their copies. They can earn \$85 or even \$100 in sales for every \$1 spent.

But when they try to “create this desire, it is no longer advertising but education. And, as education, it can produce at best only one dollar in sales for every dollar spent on advertising. No single advertiser can afford to educate the American public. He must rely on forces far greater than any advertising budget to build this mass desire. And then he can make those forces work for him—by directing that desire onto his particular product.”

The forces that create mass desire

[Schwartz](#) in his Breakthrough Advertising divides the forces that create mass desire into two categories.

1) **Permanent forces** and

2) **The forces of change**

Permanent forces can be

1 a) Mass instinct and

1 b) Mass technological problems.

2) The forces of change

2 a) The beginning, the fulfillment, and the reversal of a trend.

2 b) Mass Education

1 a) Mass instincts

Mass instincts are desires connected to our more fundamental wants and needs. For example, everyone wants to be beautiful, healthy, and look younger. These desires are constant and ever-present in our lives. “The copywriter’s problem here is not to pick out the trend—it is there for everyone to see. His job is to distinguish his product from the others that were there before it—to create a fresh appeal—to build a stronger believability—to shift desire from the fulfillment offered by one product to that offered by another.”

1 b) A mass technological problem.

These are everyday problems such as headaches, lousy internet connection, electricity solution, etc. The desire is here. People try to solve these problems and buy various products until they satisfy their desire. “And here the copywriter has the same problem—to offer the same claim of relief as his competitors, but offer it in a new way”.

2 a) The beginning, the fulfillment, and the reversal of a trend.

We are witnesses to many trends over time. For example, people decide to build a swimming pool in their yards to improve their status. They choose to use AI apps instead of human help. These desires have the beginning, the fulfillment, and the reversal of a trend. “Here, the copywriter is dealing with the straws in the wind that may indicate a hurricane. Here he needs sensitivity, foresight, intuition. He must be able to see and catch the rising tide when it’s almost invisible... and, always, how to be there first”.

2 b) Mass Education

People are becoming more and more knowledgeable about new trends as they appear on the horizon. Next, the copywriter will need to know how much and what people know to incorporate that information into the copywriting process.

According to Eugene M. Schwartz, “This mass desire must already be there. It must already exist. You cannot create it, and you cannot fight it. But you can—and must—direct it, channel it, focus it onto your particular product.”

How to Direct the Mass Desire Toward Your Specific Product

To complete their job, the copywriter employs three tools: their understanding of people's goals, dreams, desires, and emotions, their client's product, and the advertising message that connects the two.

The copywriter works in three steps to complete their task. Generally speaking, they go something like this:

1. Select the most strong desire that can be applied to your product and make that their focus.

You can find in Breakthrough Advertising that every mass desire has three essential characteristics.

The first is the level of urgency, intensity, and degree of demand that must be met. Consider the difference between persistent arthritic symptoms and a slight headache.

In the second dimension, staying power is defined as the degree of repetition and the difficulty to become satisfied. For example, raw hunger can be distinguished from a desire for gourmet meals.

And the third dimension is the scope of the project, which is defined as the number of people who have the same desire.

Examples include the proportion of males who are prepared to pay \$10 for a vehicle accessory that saves gas, in comparison with the proportion who are willing to pay the same price for an accessory that only protects future repair expenditures.

Every product satisfies two, three, or four of these universally held desires. However, only one can reach out to your customer through your headline and capture their attention. Therefore, the most crucial step you will take in crafting your ad is deciding which alternate desires you want to pursue.

If you get this wrong, nothing else you do in the advertisement will matter.

“To sum up the first stage, then, you try to choose the mass desire that gives you the most power in all three dimensions. You try to tap a single overwhelming desire existing today in the hearts and minds of millions of people who are actively seeking to satisfy it at this very moment”.

2. Put and reinforce that desire in the headline of your ad.

In any case, your headline—even if it does not explicitly name your product—is the first and most crucial step in recognizing this mass desire, justifying and deepening it, and steering its resolution along a specific path.

3. “And then you take the series of performances that are built into your product—what your product does—and you show your prospect how these product performances inevitably satisfy that desire”.