

Creating a TV Commercial

Television commercials are powerful tools to convince people to support a particular point of view on an issue or to purchase a product or service. These commercials attempt to appeal to viewers on an emotional level and to persuade them to feel obligated to subscribe to a point of view or to buy a product or service. Slogans, music, images, dialogue, and a variety of special effects are used to gain viewers' attention.

For the purposes of this learning experience, determine if you will only develop a plan, including storyboard, for the commercial or whether it will also be filmed. In many cases the outcomes of the learning experience can be achieved without shooting; however, conducting the filming and sharing it with others may provide additional motivation and enjoyment for students.

Suggestions for Students

Planning Your Commercial:

- Identify the issue, idea, or product that will be the focus of your commercial.
- Determine who the intended audience will be. In other words, who might be concerned about the issue you present, or the product you wish to sell?
- Watch a variety of TV commercials and note the most effective strategies used.
- Brainstorm a list of ideas and approaches you might use, and select the one that you think might be the most effective.
- Develop the strategy that you will use to get the viewers' attention and to convince them of the importance of your point of view or of your product.

Preparing the Script and Storyboard:

- The script should be simple, focused, and use effective language.
- Consider using a catchy slogan that could be repeated in your commercial.
- Identify how many scenes you will have and the kind of camera shots for each. Develop this into a storyboard for better organization and filming.
- Write the script for each scene with reference to points you identified in the outline.
- Decide if the dialogue will take place "inside" the action, or if you will use a "voice-over" to provide background information. Keep dialogue simple and short.
- Prepare images, backgrounds, and props that you plan to use
- Keep in mind that most commercials run for only 30 seconds.
- If you shoot the commercial, arrange access to necessary equipment.

Reviewing:

- Carefully review the outcomes and expectations of the assignment to make sure they have been met.
- Review the slogans, dialogue, images, and other strategies you have used to make sure they are effective and persuasive.
- Have a friend assess your plan and storyboard and provide any suggestions.
- Make final preparations for shooting.

Shooting the Commercial (optional)