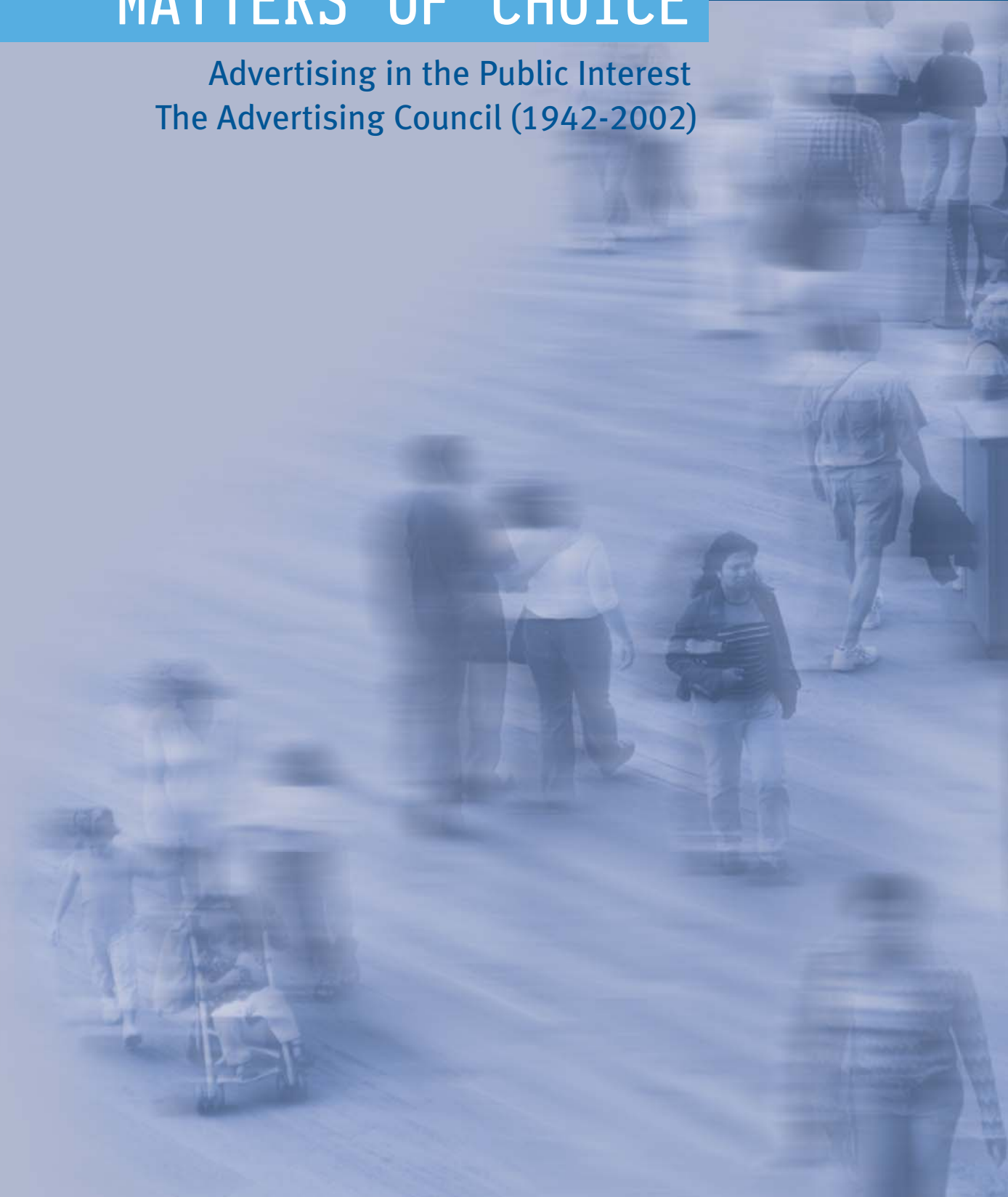




MATTERS OF CHOICE

Advertising in the Public Interest
The Advertising Council (1942-2002)



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THE BIRTH OF THE AD COUNCIL



Public service as an advertising category dates back to the founding of the Ad Council, although advertisements addressing national and social issues began years before. Newspaper ads recruited soldiers and raised money during the Civil War and, beginning in 1908, large companies and trade associations used a new genre, corporate advertising, to gain public understanding and sympathy for their views on complex issues.

Some of the most dramatic and artistic advertisements ever printed are the posters commissioned by the U.S. government during World War I. A gifted generation of illustrators helped enlist soldiers, raise Liberty Loans and fill war jobs.

In the first World War, the idea of advertising contributing to a national cause had modest beginnings. One agency billed the government at cost, but didn't take any profit for its work on the third Liberty Loan drive. The Creel Commission, responsible for wartime information in the U.S. during 1917-1918, received \$2.5 million in donated advertising services, printing and media. This was the start of unpaid service by the business community which would bring the Ad Council into being 24 years later.

THE BEGINNINGS: OUT OF ADVERSITY

The thesis that the business of America is business had been more widely accepted in the late 1920s than it was at the beginning of the 1940s. And business knew it. Harold B. Thomas, who later became the first vice chairman of The Advertising Council, would write of the post-Depression years: "Business was attacked from all sides because business wasn't producing, wasn't making money, wasn't providing jobs." Quite naturally, advertising, as the business practice most prominently in the eye and ear of the public, came in for a large share of criticism and condemnation.

Advertising people were concerned that criticism could erode the credibility of advertising and lead to legislation that would tax its use and regulate its content.

Advertisers and advertising agencies, as well as the media that depended on them, reacted in a variety of ways in 1940 and '41. The common thread in each proposed remedy was that its aim was to protect advertising. The consensus among the advertising and media professionals was to run ads explaining the economic value of advertising in creating jobs, wealth and low prices.



However, one individual would fault this approach. The need, he felt, was to protect the overall business system, of which advertising was just one of many components. This individual was James Webb Young, an advertising writer and university professor, whose formal education ended in the eighth grade. Several advertising leaders share credit for creating the Ad Council, but the founding father is James Webb Young.

Two major associations, the Association of National Advertisers (ANA) and the American Association of Advertising Agencies, separately commissioned studies on the role and effectiveness of advertising. The Advertising Research Foundation conducted polls. However, this activity did little more than create new worries. So, in the second half of 1941, leadership of the two associations called an unprecedented joint meeting for mid-November and invited the leadership of media associations and radio and print unions. Paul West, president of the ANA and later, for many years, the treasurer of The Advertising Council, said in his letter of invitation, “The common cause...is survival.”

AT STAKE: PRESERVING ADVERTISING

The goal was nothing less than to preserve advertising. The search for salvation drew 500 ad men to the meeting held on November 13-15, 1941, at The Homestead Resort in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia.

Most of the meeting’s content could have been expected: speeches about the threats to national brands, as well as the advertising of them; glowing reports on the economic effects of advertising; and case histories on advertising's achievements for specific manufacturers.

But the session on the middle day, “What action can be taken?” turned out to be worth the \$25 price of a suite at the Homestead.

The speaker was James Webb Young who articulated the idea and mission of advertising in the public interest. He saw this kind of communication as a powerful way to help people while rebuilding respect for American business and the competitive economic system which business had helped to create and needed to thrive.



WRITER, EDUCATOR, THINKER

Young was thoroughly an advertising man. He began working with the J. Walter Thompson (JWT) agency in 1921 as an office boy, and later rose to vice president. JWT's house magazine said of Young, "Beginning in 1912, he was in and out of J. Walter Thompson for 52 years. And it is fair to say that after Stanley and Helen Resor, Young was the paramount influence on the J. Walter Thompson Company in that period." What he and the ANA's Paul West started at the Homestead on November 14 led, ultimately, to Young's service as the second peacetime chairman of the Ad Council and both Young and West's later election to The Advertising Hall of Fame.

Rather than lament the country's lack of appreciation for advertising, Young took advertising down a peg and defined it as a tool of an enterprise much larger in scope: American business. "What will it profit us" he asked, "to win the battle of advertising and lose the battle of business?"

Young said that advertising's survival and progress were wholly dependent on the strength of business. "Only through the dynamic economy can we maintain free enterprise, and with it, the advertising business. But let us do more," he said of advertising, describing its potential power to influence social change.

"It ought to be used for open propaganda in international relations, to create understanding and reduce friction. It ought to be used to wipe out such diseases of ignorance as childbed fever. It ought to do the nutritional job this country needs to have done. It ought to be the servant of music, of art, of literature and of all the forces of righteousness, even more than it is. When will we stop fighting over just the existing business and go back to selling advertising?" Young asked. "When will we sell it into these new levels of usefulness, this larger stature?"

Young, in a 30-minute talk, created the idea of the Ad Council, then and now, the most visible demonstration of corporate willingness to assume social responsibility. He envisioned an organization, a council that would have a powerful and positive effect on the individual lives of Americans. It would be financed and managed by business and owe its existence to the freedom to communicate ideas.

OFF AND RUNNING

The response to Young's speech was electric. The meeting minutes report that committees were formed to organize "The new Advertising Council, or whatever it is to be called," and to raise money, get an office and hire a staff.



Washington had sent emissaries to the Homestead meeting. One of them, industrialist William L. Blatt of the Office of Production Management, said the meeting was worthless unless it rallied industry to national defense. Hitler was the enemy in an avowed, but not yet declared war. Last-minute diplomacy with Japan was breaking down. Preparing to mobilize, Washington was having new and more friendly thoughts about the role of advertising.

The pace of organization was swift. The attack on Pearl Harbor followed the Homestead meeting by three weeks. A month after that there was a War Advertising Council with a full-time volunteer CEO, Chester J. LaRoche, Chairman of Young & Rubicam, and a mission to place the resources of advertisers, agencies and the media at the service of the government.

The outsiders from the maligned advertising community were about to become insiders, valued partners with those in Washington who would make policy and war. Raymond Rubicam, Chester La Roche's boss and colleague, said at the time, "If advertising and advertising people play the part they are capable of playing, then fewer men will die."

GOVERNMENT BONDS

The first subject for the Ad Council and the most popular public service campaign ever was the drive to help sell U.S. Government Savings Bonds. Savings Bonds became Defense Bonds until 1942, when agency executive Walter Weir asked if it wasn't more logical to call them War Bonds. They became Savings Bonds again in 1945 and the ads appealed to prudent investment interest rather than patriotism. The name War Bonds returned during the Korean War. President Lyndon Johnson wanted to renew a war bond campaign during the Vietnam War, but to no avail. Savings Bonds drew up to \$75 million in donated media annually before being discontinued as an Ad Council effort in the 1980s.

THE WAR YEARS: OFF WITH A BANG

Under pressure, advertising people can move fast. With the start of war, The Advertising Council, a shiny new idea in November 1941, got organized with dispatch to rally Americans to win the war. Just a year later, arms production was stepping into high gear, and the war was beginning to turn around on two crucial fronts, Guadalcanal in the Pacific and Stalingrad. By then, the men who had organized The Advertising Council, christened The War Advertising Council for the period from late 1942 to fall of 1945, were in the midst of a communications effort involving the contribution of advertising in the amount of \$100 million a year, several times the total pre-war budgets of the largest national or retail advertiser.



AD COUNCIL ORGANIZES ON THE DOUBLE

Beginning on December 15, 1941, when the nucleus of The Advertising Council held its first meeting with Donald M. Nelson, Chairman of the War Production Board, there was little doubt that the role of advertising would be significant. Official Washington, through Nelson, saw the Ad Council as, "A focal point through which the government could most effectively obtain the counsel and help now so greatly needed."

Soon, operating both in Washington and New York, the Ad Council worked in tandem with the Office of War Information (OWI), headed by one of the country's best journalists, radio commentator Elmer Davis. The Ad Council leadership consulted with government departments, helped them decide on the priorities for advertising campaigns and enlisted the support of industries and specific companies to address themes that required civilian support. The Ad Council and OWI staff cooperated on background material. Fact sheets were distributed to the media for their writers to adapt for radio programs or news stories and to the advertising agencies, whose staffs prepared copy and art for print, radio and outdoor advertising campaigns.

Most campaigns were coordinated by a member of The War Advertising Council's Board of Directors. Among these were well-known advertising people like Neil McElroy, Manger of Advertising at Procter & Gamble, and agency founder Leo Burnett, both of whom would serve the Ad Council in peace as well as war.

Nelson Metcalf was just into his second year as a copywriter with the Colton agency in Boston when he was told to write an ad for its railroad client explaining how delays in passenger service, so irritating to regular riders, were due to the priority to move troops.



The Kid in Upper Four

This wartime ad for the New Haven Railroad made a difference. It set a high standard for advertising agencies to aim for in their volunteer work for the Ad Council.

The "Kid in Upper Four" was scheduled for one insertion in the New York Herald Tribune. The day it appeared, Elmer Davis, head of the Office of War Information, ordered that it be run in newspapers around the country. It has since been shown in many anthologies of advertising.



APPLYING AGENCY EXPERIENCE

Advertising agencies were assigned to prepare plated newspaper ads and radio scripts on subjects related to the clients they had worked for before the war. Advertisers signed war ads and paid the media to run them as part of their product advertising schedules. For example, the American Iron and Steel Institute sponsored the metal salvage drive, and the Glycerine and Associated Industries Association sponsored the campaign to save and reclaim fats, which was also supported by advertisers in the soap and meatpacking industries.

The Ad Council encouraged relevant product tie-ins, such as the leading hat manufacturer's admonition to those in on military secrets to "Keep it under your Stetson."

The future survival of businesses that ran war ads was a matter of importance. The Ad Council and the government encouraged advertisers to include the brand or generic names of their peacetime products in their war ads, so their company's trademarks and position in the marketplace would not be lost or forgotten.

BRAG ADS

The famous wartime ad, "The Kid in Upper Four," brought luster to the New Haven Railroad, the company that signed it. The Pabst Brewing company celebrated U.S. victory in the sea battle of Midway with a toast to the enemy Navy: Bottoms Up!

But in the early days of the war, the Ad Council had to restrain certain businesses that created what had become known as brag ads. These companies were prone to run political ads glorifying private enterprise and pie-in-the-sky approaches rosily depicting the post-war world.

Raymond Rubicam noted that some manufacturers credited air conditioners with sinking enemy ships and water conditioners with having shot-up Panzer tanks. "A ball bearing manufacturer informed us that the subject of ball bearings is on everyone's lips nowadays, and sugar was an Axis-killer and castor beans had left the medicine cabinet for the battlefield," he said. A controversy erupted over brag ads when, to the reported delight of tobacco magnate George Washington Hill, the cigarette package pigment his copywriters had christened "Lucky Strike Green" went off to war with fanfare fit for a regiment of heroes.

President Truman would later say of brag ads: "To read their dramatically written messages and to see the highly colored photographs and drawings, one would almost think our battles were not won by our fighting men at all, but by our war industries."



Brag ads were the exceptions, but they prompted criticism because their sponsors took advantage of the war to deduct the cost of war-related advertising as a reasonable expense of doing business during this national emergency. Shaming the sponsors away from brag advertising became a priority of The War Advertising Council, and most of the bombast was gone after about a year.



WOMEN IN WAR JOBS

It wasn't the first time women were recruited for jobs in offices and factories, but in 1943, the mandate was not just economic. Ads like this made an abiding change in the relationship between women and the workplace. Employment outside of the home became socially accepted, even desirable.

WAR ADS EVERYWHERE

Today it's difficult to imagine how pervasive war themes were in advertising. But a look at the 1940s issues of Life, Collier's, or The Saturday Evening Post shows how much advertising - and editorial - backed war themes. Analysis of the advertising in general interest magazines shows that up to one-third of all ads were patriotic in the first two years of the war and more than half had patriotic motifs in 1944 and 1945.

In the 1990s, major marketers began adding elements of communications other than advertising to their campaigns. The War Advertising Council had used alternative methods over half a century ago. The war campaigns often included alternative methods to advertising, including ideas for everything from magazine editorial to in-store promotions. Thirty-eight magazines, for example, pledged their covers to the Womanpower campaign of 1943 that helped recruit two million women for jobs in munitions and other defense industries.

George Ludlum, former Ad Council vice president, remembers how important the fact sheets were when he was at the OWI. He and his colleagues in the Domestic Radio Bureau would research the background and needs of a national shortage, for example. The fact sheets they prepared were given to agency copywriters to adapt into selling messages. They were also sent out to radio producers and announcers who would write their own copy around them or just ad lib related messages on the air.



Ludlum recalls one individual who wrote and produced a number of radio dramas as a most avid adapter of the fact sheets. If a character in one of his shows was failing fast in a deathbed scene and a tearful relative asked for a few last words of wisdom, the feeble patient would marshal a final spurt of energy to say, “as many as, 1,700 V-Mail letters will fit in a space the size of a cigarette pack and the food you save can feed a soldier.”

Bags for diapers, side panels of laundry and oil trucks, the end wraps of loaves of bread, all carried war advertising messages, often with the slogan that summed up much of the war effort: “Use it up, wear it out, make it do, or do without.”

Never before was there so much advertising for any client, a billion dollars worth from 1942 through 1945. Never before had it helped to do so much. About four million of the one billion dollars in total War Advertising Council ads helped promote War Bonds, and over 85 million Americans bought them. There was an urgent need for 48,000 merchant seamen in 1944. Advertising helped get them, then recruited two million women for war jobs and many more as uniformed Cadet Nurses, WACS, and WAVES. Half of American households had their own Victory Gardens. Somehow, General Patton's tanks and trucks didn't run out of gas or gunpowder, grease or tires. And relationships formed between causes and advertising during the war would strengthen efforts to reduce fires in the nation's forests and support the American Red Cross for years to come.

Born to preserve business and advertising, the Ad Council had done much more by putting business interests on the back burner and addressing issues that mattered most to the country.

Harold Thomas said of The War Advertising Council: “Its original purpose to counter the attacks on business and advertising had obviously given way to putting the skill and facilities of advertising at the service of our country at war.”



THE TRANSITION

War to Peace



Although there were many meetings in the waning days of the war to discuss its post-war future, there was no question that The Advertising Council would have one. The volunteers and the Office of War Information had done everything asked of them to help the war effort. And more. Early in the war, it was estimated that there would be \$13 to \$15 million a year in war advertising. The actual total was more than 20 times that. The pre-war objective of improving the standing of business and advertising had been attained. In fact, it had been forgotten in the pressure of serving the country.

Theodore S. Replier, who succeeded Dr. Miller McClintock as executive director and in 1947 would become the first president of the Ad Council, told the Outdoor Advertising Association in December, 1945: “Business prestige rose rapidly in the eyes of the American people. The function and power of advertising came forth with a clarity that had never before impressed official Washington. Business had learned that the best public relations came through public service.”

Just before his death, President Roosevelt asked the Ad Council to carry on after the war. Likewise, his successor Harry Truman saw need for the Ad Council to help form public opinion and attitudes on peacetime issues.

The statements from Roosevelt and Truman urging the Ad Council to continue reflected The War Advertising Council's legacy to the Executive Branch. This legacy, a reliance by the federal government on the Ad Council, has lasted more than 60 years over the administration of 12 Presidents. What the Federal government learned from the war experience is that the advertising communications industry has great power to affect the attitudes and actions of Americans in time of crisis. The White House has always believed that the Ad Council is an important organization for arousing patriotic instincts and that the government-sponsored social programs can obtain support from the people through public service advertising. The attentiveness of the White House residents to the Ad Council over many years attests to their perception of the Council as a ready reserve to help mobilize the civilian population in national emergencies.

NEW ENEMIES

Ad Council President Ted Replier summed up the post-war feelings of many of those involved with the Ad Council when he said, “The war never stopped. Only the enemy has changed.”

The issues that prevailed in Council campaigns in the late 1940s and 1950s were simple and direct. There was a continued need for blood donations to the American Red Cross, and the Ad Council also kept warning Americans to be careful with matches in the forest.



A principal new issue was highway safety. Factories that made tanks needed time to retool for sedans and convertibles. People who had been deprived of gasoline sped to the open road, often in worn-out flivvers and with tires that had been patched to last through the war and beyond. They needed reminders to slow down.

In 1947, the Ad Council began its many years of association with the National Safety Council, a partnership later credited with helping save up to 600,000 lives. In the first full year of this campaign, the number of highway fatalities, which had been rising steadily in the pre-war years, turned downward.



Polio Vaccine

Although new horrors like AIDS would emerge, humanity can take heart in the fact that some diseases, such as polio, have been all but conquered. Advertising helped make this possible. Actually, the country responded slowly to the new vaccine for paralytic polio. Three sets of shots were required at first, and it took an extended and repetitive advertising effort to get 80 percent of the at-risk populace fully immunized.

HELP FOR VETERANS

The Ad Council's Peace-Time Service Plan promoted other programs. Some were for veterans; others were developed on tuberculosis, diabetes and infant mortality. Preservation of natural resources, such as soil, wood lots, farmland and water reservoirs, became subjects of national campaigns.

Continuing support was pledged to the fundraising efforts of the Community Chest (later to become the United Way), the American Red Cross and U.S. Savings Bonds.

There were campaigns to sustain a healthy economic climate, to encourage wide employment and to help eliminate barriers to interstate and international trade. The Ad Council Plan envisioned short-term projects to be undertaken for the government on such subjects as changes in tax laws, the Census, and amendments to the Social Security Act.



During the first post-war year, the Ad Council developed 18 campaigns. The American Red Cross got the most media attention in 1946. With lofty ambitions yet a modest goal - \$30 million in donated advertising for the first year – the Ad Council again surpassed expectations as advertisers and media volunteered \$100 million in radio, print and outdoor time and space.

THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ISSUES

A social program had to be enacted by Congress to be considered as a subject for an Ad Council campaign administered by the Executive Branch. No pork barrel or political causes need apply. However, many of the post-war Ad Council causes came to be sponsored by private groups. Nonprofit associations that sought the Ad Council's support required a vote favorable to their application by two-thirds of the membership of a committee of distinguished authorities in such fields as science, education, labor, business and social service. Thus began the work of the influential Public Policy Committee, which continues as the Advisory Committee on Public Issues today. Since 1947, its chairmen have included corporate CEOs, as well as leaders in medicine, education and policy.

As the Ad Council's think tank, anticipating issues and problems that lie ahead, the committee draws on formidable brainpower. In the field of higher education alone, Committee membership has included the presidents of Harvard, the University of Chicago, Dartmouth, Hunter, Vassar, Rhode Island School of Design, Columbia, as well as deans and teachers from many other universities, two education Commissioners of the States and chancellor of New York's Public Schools.

WASHINGTON CONFERENCES

During the Truman Administration, the Ad Council began its Washington Conference. It has continued under every administration since. Initially, these meetings had a specific agenda to take up with government. For example, there was a presentation of a new campaign in 1950 on the American heritage and the responsibilities as well as privileges it confers. The Washington Conferences have since become substantive briefings by the Executive branch for business leaders. The highlight of many conferences has been a reception or dinner with the President, his family and/or members of the cabinet.

But there have been minor glitches. Harry Truman's staff got his schedule mixed up; the business leaders assembled at the White House and received a Presidential address that had been written for a contingent of school superintendents.



During the Vietnam War, Lyndon Johnson called on the leadership of the Ad Council to harangue them with the importance, as he saw it, of a national advertising blitz in support of the war, even though the people increasingly wanted out of Southeast Asia. When President Johnson left the meeting to his Treasury Secretary Henry Fowler, the prevailing feeling was that it just couldn't and wouldn't be done.

Ronald Reagan disappointed one conference and was chided editorially by Advertising Age for not meeting with the group. A fervid supporter of the Ad Council and an individual who had appeared in TV commercials as well as films, President Reagan was a genial host two years later. During one White House reception, Nancy Reagan proposed what became a large-scale Ad Council campaign (Just Say No) on drug abuse.

American Economic System

They may seem quaint in light of recent history, and they were criticized as being unnecessarily pro-business, but the series of "free enterprise" campaigns the Ad Council ran in the 1950s through the 70s were milestones in the progress of public service advertising. They sought to deepen understanding and develop acceptance of issues much more complex than those requiring a yes or no decision, such as whether to get a chest x-ray or drive under 55.

These were war advertising campaigns that ran in peacetime, just as proudly American in opposition to Communism as "The Kid in Upper Four" advertisement was to Fascism.

THREE STRONG SUGGESTIONS

The idea for the Washington Conference was suggested by Frederick Mosel who was the Ad Council's first fundraiser. He proposed two other major innovations that endure.

First is the annual Distinguished Public Service Award to honor a corporate leader for outstanding service to the public interest. Early honorees were such Ad Council stalwarts as Charles E. Wilson of General Electric, Charles Francis and Charles Mortimer of General Foods, followed later by such leaders as David Rockefeller, Gen. Lucius Clay, James Roche of General Motors, Howard Morgens of Procter & Gamble and Thomas J. Watson of IBM.

The traditional public service award dinner draws as many as 800 people to New York's Waldorf-Astoria Hotel and serves as a fundraising event for the Ad Council as well.



LEGENDARY IN ADVERTISING: THE CRC

An important innovation of the '50s was the establishment of the Council's Campaigns Review Committee (CRC), a group formed to ensure effective advertising.

The CRC reviews and critiques campaigns at every stage. Rare are the strategies, creative ideas or executions that pass muster unscathed at the CRC's monthly meetings. The committee is composed of several dozen members, many of them recognized among the most skilled creators and judges of advertising. The men and women on the CRC are charged with helping to make the campaigns they review more effective.

For many a writer, art director or account manager, presenting work to this group has been an experience ranging from stimulating to terrifying, a rite of passage for individuals growing up in the advertising business. Unfailingly polite, the CRC members still show little patience for ideas that are tired, sentimental or dull, or lack clarity or impact.

By achieving high standards of quality, the Ad Council has done what its constituents do –build a brand name –a known and valuable identity for itself. As the Ad Council developed, so did the advertising category it had created.

There are many causes for which national or local agencies or the media prepare public service ads. Almost from the beginning, the Ad Council branded its own products with a symbol that appears in all print and outdoor and, from the 1950s on, in television commercials. The Ad Council logo attests to the high standards of accuracy, creativity and integrity that a sponsor gains from association with the Ad Council. These qualities, expressed in the Ad Council bug, help get the advertising used by the media leaders who decide which public service messages to print or air. The public also has come to trust the credibility of messages from the Ad Council above others. The Ad Council logo, which has been modernized three times in 60 years, is regarded as a seal of approval to the media and to their audiences.



MEDIA ARE THE GLUE

Support of media always has been crucial. “Media are the glue that holds the Ad Council together,” said Dr. Frank Stanton, who represented CBS on the Council’s Board of Directors in the early days.

A major change in the Ad Council’s operating procedure was needed when control of television broadcast programming shifted in the 1960s from sponsoring advertisers who produced their own shows, to the networks who assumed new control of programming. From this point on, most Ad Council messages ran independent of advertiser control because advertisers no longer decided what went on the air and no longer sponsored the same shows week after week. The mainstream of the Ad Council became all volunteer. Corporations provided financial support and lent executives to direct campaigns. Agencies created the work. And the media ran it without charge, a major difference from the earlier years when Ad Council messages were part of the national advertisers’ paid schedules.

There were other media developments: the emergence of new forms of transit and display advertising, cable TV, direct mail, and systems to improve the efficiency of handling requests for literature or referrals to social agencies generated by advertising. Most campaigns asked for a response from the public, made it simple for them to call in without charge, and referred these calls automatically to the caller’s hometown.

Yet there are constants in the media. One is that radio remains king. The organization that got its start working with the Domestic Radio Bureau of the Office of War Information in 1942 received \$855 million in donated media in 2001, and radio – as through all of the Council’s history – was the largest media contributor in dollar value.



THE AD COUNCIL AND AMERICAN BUSINESS

For a while in the 1950s and 1960s, the Ad Council positioned itself as serving business with such rationales as “What helps people, helps business,” and “Every business is a citizen of its community and the nation.”

Some of its campaigns, the Ad Council pointed out, brought tangible benefits to business: auto safety campaigns were extolled as a service to the insurance industry; forest fire prevention helped the housing industry; and soap makers benefited from work to salvage fats. The extent of this service to industry was reported, glowingly, in the Ad Council’s Annual Reports of the sixties. The point was made that the Ad Council represents business at its socially conscious best and that it’s okay for public service to do a little good for business in the process, as long as public service comes first.

The point was made, generally accepted, but not belabored. And by the 1980s it was not often repeated.



FOUR DISTINCT ERAS



Leadership came and went in the Ad Council. Most chairmen served one year. The first chairwoman, Pat Carbine, publisher of Ms. magazine, wasn't elected until 1983, although settlement house pioneer Helen Hall began her many years on the Public Policy committee in the 1950s, and IBM executive Jane Cahill joined the board in 1971.

Ted Replier was succeeded as president in 1967 by Robert P. Keim, vice president of Chase Manhattan Bank, who shared the human concerns of his predecessor and added a strong talent for organization and diplomacy during his 20 years as president. He retired in 1987, and Ruth A. Wooden, executive account director from the N.W. Ayer agency, succeeded him. Upon Ms. Wooden's retirement in 1999, Peggy Conlon left her position as Publisher at Broadcasting & Cable magazine to take over the role and became the organization's fourth president.

TIMES, ISSUES, PRIORITIES AND CHANGE

A recognized attribute of advertising is that it mirrors the people and the times it addresses. Advertising is an ideal illustration for history, showing how we looked and lived, sharing our values and concerns.

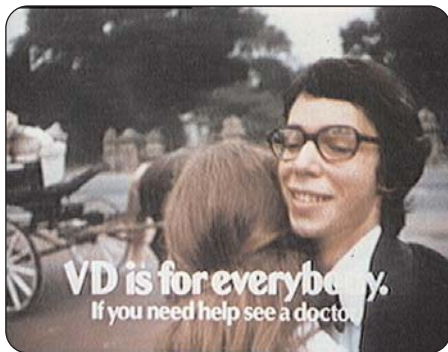
The years of the four chief executives reflect changing customs and times in the country and in advertising; changes that are occasionally dramatic, yet in other ways, hardly changes at all.

For much of its first 25 years, roughly the span of Replier's service, the Ad Council and America were on a roll. The war experience imparted a tremendous will to win over any obstacle and a confidence and optimism that solutions to any social problem could be found as good and thoughtful people reasoned together. Hadn't they got the Ad Council organized in a matter of days? Look at the unbelievable and swift accomplishments of advertising in three years of war.

There was a closeness and a team spirit that the Ad Council personified, bringing business and cultural leaders together. They had easy access to corridors of power in Eisenhower's administration. Ike and Replier respected each other's interests in golf and painting. The Ad Council president had set up the exhibit in Moscow where Vice President Nixon and Nikita Khrushchev staged their historic kitchen debate.



The Ad Council served the people well and was conscious of its success in serving business too. The post-war years saw the growth of the concept of corporate responsibility. American business leaders and the Ad Council could and often did point to each other with fraternal pride.



VD Is for Everyone

In the 1970s, ads like this didn't preach. Though tame against today's explicitness, they paved the way for frank and nonjudgmental messages on health problems, such as AIDS.

The only substantial campaign of the War Advertising Council that never got off the ground was a 1943 radio and print effort on the dangers of syphilis and gonorrhea,

prepared for the U.S. Public Health Service. Several Catholic publications voiced implacable opposition, even though the proposed ads attached moral stigma to VD.

EXEMPLAR OF CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY

The Ad Council has been the cause, symptom and prime example of corporate responsibility by business. Until the Ad Council came along, the business person was a villain, a necessary evil or a hero whose success and simple virtues were publicized or invented by Horatio Alger and Ivy Lee.

The Ad Council helped make service to the community an accepted and quite normal fact of business, not a practice deserving of adulation by the partisan or suspicion by the critic. Business benefited from trying to help the public in ways other than making them customers.

With increased attention being paid by business to concerns of the country, the Ad Council became, for a while, the principal link between business and government leaders.

The Ad Council's White House conferences drew the chief executives of the largest U.S. companies to Washington. For a while it was the only time the White House received a large delegation from industry. And many of the executives who became involved with the Ad Council had served or would serve as Cabinet officers, ambassadors or dollar-a-year men in Administrations from the 50s to the 90s.

In its years of most confidence, the Ad Council, like business, did have one substantial fear. That was fear of Communism taking over the world outside and insinuating itself in America. This led to a preoccupation with addressing capitalistic ideals in several campaigns as well as helping victims of oppression abroad through campaigns for CARE, Hungarian Relief and Radio Free Europe.

Advertising was riding high in the first 25 or 30 years, and then – as now – its leaders were deeply involved in the Ad Council, men like Lou Brockway of Young & Rubicam, Ted Bates, Leo Burnett, and Henry Schachte of J. Walter Thompson. Not that the work of the Ad Council was easy. James Webb Young said in 1955, “there is one thing I have learned. It takes more cunning to do good than to do evil.” These were years when patriotism and spiritual values mattered greatly. Religion in American Life ads were among the most widely used and drew millions to worship.

RESULTS ON GRAND SCALE

The advertising proved to be effective. Thousands of lives were saved on the roads by National Safety Council campaigns. Over 30 billion dollars was raised in the campaign to finance higher education. Millions of acres were saved from forest fires.

But in some respects, confidence exceeded the realities that were quickly and steadily developing in American society. Consider, for example, the proposed Sunset Effect. This idea was that every three years, each Ad Council campaign would be reviewed with the assumption that, unless an exception were granted, the campaign would be dropped. The premise, understandably based on remembrance of results swiftly achieved in wartime, was that with three years of national advertising, most problems could be solved.



But it was not so. At the first review, five of the six campaigns examined were granted exceptions and allowed, even encouraged, to carry on. Only one, an interfaith hunger appeal, was dropped.

Replifier summed up his philosophy and his era with the gracious and patriotic advice he offered his colleagues: “Always put the interests of the country first.”

It was Replifier who gauged the mood of his time when he said, “Americans have grown sick and tired of crises and perhaps even a little bored by them. The Ad Council is by nature a professional Paul Revere, crying of crises present and future. The quieter the times, the tougher becomes the Ad Council’s job.”

A PROUD NATION

The Ad Council was proud to herald the achievements of a proud nation. Those who created the ads knew that when they asked for help in building better schools or asked Americans to give to the college of their choice, the public would respond generously and gladly. And they did. There was no doubt that supportive family values were, like genteel prosperity, in place to be tapped. “Take pride in America.” “The better you know America, the better the future looks.” Campaigns to get out the vote surpassed each other in results every four years.

TIMES OF CRISIS

When Ted Replifier retired in 1965, the next era was moving in. The assassination in Dallas had occurred just two years earlier and crises were compounding.

The second president of the Ad Council, Bob Keim, made a statement quite different from that of his predecessor. Keim, who has been called the guiding spirit of the Ad Council and was its leader from 1966 to 1987, holds the view that “the Ad Council is at its best in times of crisis.”

The tranquility of the buttoned-down Eisenhower years ended when John Kennedy became president and were laid to uneasy rest when he was shot. “What Kennedy unleashed was a whole new wave of thinking about the country’s problems,” Keim recalled.

“After the Kennedy and King assassinations, we went into a period of ferment and internal discord, the likes of which the country had not seen since the Civil War.”



PROBLEMS LIKE NEVER BEFORE

The Ad Council was a bit confused by the virulence of change. The Ad Council leadership was briefed on riots in the Watts section of Los Angeles. The idea, Keim recalled, “was that people were on the brink of racial oppression, and we had been treating national problems with drive carefully campaigns.”

Gradually, and with some criticism for slowness, the Ad Council came to face up to the harder issues. The urban crisis, minority employment, and the United Negro College Fund became subjects of campaigns for increased understanding and support.

Campaigns that had been successes because they relied on a public supportive of patriotic institutions turned sour. For example, responses to ads to vote and to cooperate with the census-taker fell way off.

PROTESTS

And there was Vietnam, when even efforts to sell government bonds and get humane treatment for POWs became targets of protest. Though Lyndon Johnson asked the Ad Council leadership for a full-blown war bond campaign, the most the Ad Council felt the public would stand for were ads showing soldiers (but not mentioning Vietnam) with the theme: “They buy bonds where they work. Do you?”

The Ad Council, prodded in some cases by Presidents, rallied support for new groups and issues: Vista, mental retardation, minority business, drugs alcohol abuse, and the Peace Corps as antidote to the Third World image of the Ugly American.

For a while some agencies shunned taking on some of the emerging issues. But this changed as they came to agree with Keim who said, “Controversy has been very good for the Ad Council. It gives us life.”

Subjects that had been taboos in polite society got full Ad Council treatment: child abuse, mental illness, and venereal disease.



HARD ISSUES

One dramatic aspect of the Ad Council's second half century was learning to live in a world of relative peace. Gone was the need for overseas propaganda and domestic debates over free enterprise and controlled economy.

But as Ad Council President Wooden pointed out in 1993, domestic problems had become deeper and darker. "Thirty-something years ago, we had a TV commercial where a prissy Miss Suzy Spotless chided her father as a litterbug for dropping a scrap of paper in the street. Today, our reel has a message telling children what to do when they find used needles or guns in the street."

A career advertising executive who started in market research, Ruth Wooden has analyzed problems and opportunities of the advertising and media industries to stretch the public benefit of every effort and every dollar.



The Crying Indian

Chief Iron Eyes Cody, Native American screen actor, achieved lasting fame as the "Crying Indian" in TV and print. Originally, Keep America Beautiful ran an anti-litter campaign with "Susan Spotless" scolding her litterbug father. Later Chief Cody's tear became a symbol for all who vowed action to reclaim a country soiled by man. It led to hundreds of other environmental messages from many sources including the Ad Council.

CONTROVERSY

An influential and visible organization cannot expect to avoid controversy, and the Ad Council has had its share.

Controversy has come from holders of a variety of social and political points of view. At the beginning, conservative politicians and newspapers accused the Office of War Information, of which the War Ad Council was an arm, of devoting its propaganda efforts to the re-election of President Roosevelt. Other critics said the advertising industry's effort to do some good was only an attempt to avoid taxes on advertising.



The Ad Council also has been criticized for not attacking the use of certain products, namely tobacco and alcoholic beverages, but points to its role as a champion of free commercial speech and the right of legal products to be advertised. A similar point of view, as well as the Ad Council's policy of not taking sides on political issues, has so far dictated a hands-off policy on advocating gun control, though the prevalence of firearms is recognized as a reason for the epidemic of violence in America. Ruth Wooden pointed out that, "We most frequently get criticized for what we don't do. We prefer to acknowledge criticism for what we do."

QUARRELS WITH ADS

There has been that kind of controversy too, generally over the issue and the point of view, rather than the creative execution. Readers balked at an anti-inflation ad that compared the public to pigs. Newspaper and magazine publishers expressed strong disapproval of a 1991 conservation campaign that appeared to promote the use of smaller ads. In 1982, the first campaign offering hope to victims of alcoholism was regarded as controversial, but treatment of subjects related to alcohol abuse is unchallenged today. In 1988, the Ad Council was the first advertiser to advocate use of condoms to prevent the spread of AIDS, and while the messages went on the air, their use by stations and networks was less frequent than in other campaigns.

In its early and middle life, the Ad Council demonstrated strong opposition to Communism. Its campaigns on the U.S. economic system were controversial, vigorously applauded by some economists, and chided for being too rosily pro-business by others.

One of the few times a campaign had to be scrapped was when difficulties in the swine flu vaccine of the 1960s were discovered as advertising materials were being mailed to the media.

While the Ad Council has suffered brickbats from even its business constituents, like the packaging and waste-management industries, one of its most vehement controversies was over a campaign designed to increase understanding of the media.



The campaign in the 1980s on a Free Press depicted actual events that some of those involved would have preferred to see less public. The advertising asked: “If the press didn’t tell you, who would?” Irate communiqués of opposition were received when such subjects as the NASA Challenger disaster and the past allegiances of the UN’s Kurt Waldheim were reported in public service ads which made the point that while often annoying and occasionally mistake, in the long run, a free press is a vital ingredient in the freedom of all citizens in a democracy.

Occasionally, controversy has bordered on the comical. In 1950, Rep. Carroll Reece of Tennessee won a few days in the headlines with charges that the Ad Council and the Ford Foundation were Communist fronts. In the case of the Ad Council, he said that a few members of the Public Policy Committee had been members of international relations organizations which he considered Red or Pink.



In 1991, a brief tempest swirled around two of the Ad Council’s most valuable icons, the crash test dummies Vince and Larry, created by the Leo Burnett agency. A New Jersey toy company managed to obtain rights to use such characters and soon was manufacturing its own Incredible Crash Dummies which appealed to childish interest in mayhem.

When the manufacturer advertised the toys on TV, the three major TV networks banished Vince and Larry from the airwaves saying that the public might construe their safety messages as promotion of the commercial toys. As it turned out, however, the safety message of Vince and Larry proved more permanent than an individual product in the volatile toy market.

SAFETY BELTS

The Ad Council doesn’t take sides on political issues, and it won’t design advertising to influence passage of legislation. But auto safety belt ads demonstrate that an aroused public gets listened to in the hall’s of power.

A large majority of the states have enacted laws mandating the use of safety belts. It is generally conceded that the Ad Council campaigns have been a key reason with their constant reminders to “Buckle Up.”

Driving safety was one of the first civilian issues the Ad Council addressed after 1945. No one will ever know the total number of lives saved by the car radio’s appeals to drive safe, slow, and sober.



MOVING INTO THE NEXT CENTURY

With remarkable foresight, the Ad Council founders decided on a few firm rules that continue to guide the Ad Council today. The Ad Council would not be partisan politically, nor seek passage or defeat of any legislation. Nothing it touched could be commercial to the point of selling a product. The Ad Council would avoid special interest appeals and those directed to small segments of the population. Its campaign had to be applicable all across the country, though from the start, the council has encouraged the people it informs to take action locally. Most campaigns today have toll-free telephone numbers that channel individual questions to sources of help close to home. And finally, the issues addressed had to be susceptible to improvement through informed action by individuals.

The Ad Council entered the 21st century with an annual operating budget of \$22.5 million – a big jump from the first year’s budget of \$100,000. Today, contributions come from some 400 businesses nationwide as well as through indirect overhead assessments, and from the organizations that sponsor campaigns. The Ad Council also raises money for specific campaigns from foundations and individual companies.

Though media space and time and the advertising agency time and talent are free, campaign sponsoring organizations must pay costs of advertising production (TV crews, printing, etc.) and distribution to media. The sponsors also provide staff and a system to fulfill the requests for help and information that the advertising generates.

Depending on the scope of the work, costs to sponsors run from about \$500,000 to close to \$1.5 million per year, still modest expense for advertising that would require commercial clients to pay up to \$100 million.

The Board of Directors has been expanded several times over 50 years. It has always included representatives from the founding advertising and media associations, as well as others from the communications industries. The board, now with 94 members, rotates its chairmanship annually among individuals from corporations, agencies and the media. Its executive committee includes the chairman, the president, the immediate past chairman, and the three individuals who will rotate into the chairmanship in the following years.





The United Way

The most powerful use of advertising in fundraising was developed for the collective of national local causes known as the United Way. Even in World War II, the Ad Council supported the Community Chest, symbolized then by a Red Feather, which had been created by an Ad Council agency.

Paid and public service advertising have been employed successfully in fundraising campaigns by hundreds of organizations but none as successfully as this campaign which used the slogans: “The United Way. Thanks to you, it’s working,” and “It brings out the best in all of us.”

AN INFORMATION VALUE

The Ad Council has something both private and government groups want: the ability to gain public awareness of and support for an issue, employing the most persuasive talents and techniques that the art of advertising can offer. A typical campaign can channel messages, over and over again, in a volume equivalent to that of nationwide ad campaigns for kitchen appliances, detergents or packaged foods.

No wonder that the Ad Council has been swamped with inquiries about its services. The Ad Council receives about 400 requests for help a year.

To help other good causes, the Ad Council established Endorsed Campaigns status for organizations for which it does not prepare advertising but whose independently-prepared campaigns are described and endorsed in the Public Service Advertising Bulletin, the Ad Council’s bi-monthly newsletter.

TOP CREATIVITY IS A GIVEN

The Ad Council has developed a climate for creativity among agencies. The American Association of Advertising Agencies is responsible for assigning volunteer ad agencies to Ad Council campaigns. There is always a waiting list of eager agencies. For creative and account people, working on an Ad Council campaign is a sign of achievement. This work nurtures an idealistic sense of purpose in the lives of many men and women whose days otherwise are spent entirely in commercial endeavors.



PROOF THAT AD COUNCIL ADS WORK

As advertisers have come to demand measuring the results of advertising on a precise and cost-efficient basis, so has the Ad Council focused on accountability. This is a doubly difficult effort since public service advertising does not generally run on a planned schedule. But today, with innovations in obtaining and analyzing consumer responses, as well as increased focus on research, the Council has been able to demonstrate the effectiveness of its campaigns.

For example, the Ad Council knows that:

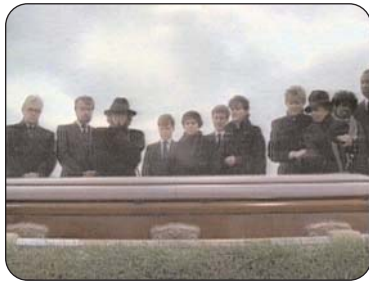
- The nearly 60-year-old Smokey Bear is recognized by 95 percent of adults and 88 percent of children as a symbol of forest fire prevention;
- McGruff the Crime Dog, the mascot for the Crime Prevention campaign is recognized by 99 percent of children ages 6-12 as a crime prevention symbol. Furthermore, according to a study done by the U.S. Justice Department, one-third of survey respondents said they learned something from the crime prevention campaign, and one-fifth said they took specific action based on what they learned;
- The campaign for the United Negro College Fund, now in its 31st year, has helped raise \$2 billion for UNCF colleges;
- Vince and Larry the crash test dummies convinced Americans to buckle up. Since the campaign began in 1985, the percentage of safety belt users increased from 21 to 67 percent;
- 60,000 of the 1 million men and women who responded to the Recruiting Teachers campaign since 1988 became teachers;
- 68% of Americans exposed to the Ad Council's Drunk Driving Prevention campaign have personally acted to preventing someone from driving drunk;
- Calls to the Big Brothers Big Sisters toll free telephone number increased by more than 120% within the first six months of the campaign. Visits to the website were up an astounding 2,000%;
- Public service announcements actually can save lives and the number of lives saved can be quantified, this documented by a controlled test of response to a commercial urging men to get tested for colon cancer.



Colon Cancer Detection

Are those 30-second dramas that people lend half an ear to worthwhile?

The advertising industry is still learning from a 1989 commercial that starts with the funeral of a middle-aged man and works back to the time in his life when he told his wife he had more important things to do than ask his doctor about a test for colon cancer.



In a significant research project, the commercial was transmitted on cable television on a planned schedule to half of a test group of households in four medium-sized cities. After a year, there was a significant increase in the number of men who discussed the subject of a colon cancer test with their physicians from among those exposed to the commercial. Since colon cancer is curable for

90 percent of patients if discovered early, the research demonstrated that public service ads, when run consistently for at least a year, can indeed save lives.

RESULTS TAKE TIME

Except at its birth and baptism in war, change has come rather slowly to the category of public service advertising and its inventor, the Ad Council.

Despite grandiose expectations, few of the problems advertising addressed were solved by just a few years of advertising. There were exceptions of course, including Polio, which virtually disappeared once the vaccine was out and people knew where to get it. Campaigns against TB were also successful.

However, in general, it took longer than expected for the ads to work. When the Ad Council tested the effectiveness of a commercial on colon cancer in 1990, it found the commercial did not elicit the desired response until it had run for a full year. As a result, now Ad Council campaigns run for longer periods. In fact new campaign sponsors are asked to commit a minimum of three years to their campaigns.



And some issues come back. Poverty, racial inequities and prejudice have returned as campaign subjects. Support of the World War II GI translates into reminders of rights enjoyed by the National Guard and Reserves today. James Webb Young asked advertising to help eliminate childbed fever. More recently, ads have pointed to the disgraceful incidence of childhood hunger and child abuse.

Problems persist or recur. But advertising that has been thoroughly, accurately and strikingly presented still makes for good choices. Of themselves these choices do not solve either society's or the individual's problems. But they help. They matter.

SHARPENING THE FOCUS

Despite over 50 years of successfully helping Americans make these choices, the Ad Council's Board of Directors decided to make a fundamental change in the Ad Council's operations in 1995. Known as Commitment 2000: Raising a Better Tomorrow, the initiative represents the Ad Council's effort to make a more lasting impact on society by focusing a majority of its resources on the range of issues that most affect the future: the health and well-being of America's children.

Commitment campaigns address a multitude of issues ranging from healthcare and education to family and community concerns.

As Ruth Wooden pointed out, "Commitment 2000 provides us with an opportunity to make an even longer-lasting impact on society's ills by addressing difficult problems earlier in the lives of our citizens, when their fundamental values and belief systems are being formed. In other words, we feel we can do even more good by taking a preventative, rather than a reactive, approach to the problems in this country."

Eight years into the 10 year initiative, the Ad Council's commitment to America's children remains as firm today as it was at its inception. Donated media and advertising value have seen a marked increase, and as a result, so has the public's interest in taking an active role to help our kids. Media and corporate partners have demonstrated strong support for the Ad Council's commitment, helping to maximize the audience for the messages. By all measurable means the commitment to America's children is reaching its goals.



However statistics, anecdotes, and a steady stream of news stories demonstrate that our children still live in an America too heavily populated by random violence and needless neglect, the unfortunate by-products of a rapidly changing society. Therefore, the Ad Council remains committed to developing communications programs intended to provide the American people with information to help improve the circumstances of our nation’s greatest resource – our children.

One of the valuable benefits of the Commitment to Children, for the Ad Council, was the opportunity to forge new partnerships to further its messages. With today’s rapidly changing media landscape, the Ad Council must work harder than ever to ensure its messages reach their intended audiences. To increase exposure of its PSAs the Ad Council began to form strategic partnerships with major media companies.

Valuable partnerships have also been forged with public-sector organizations, including the National Governor’s Association and the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP). In fact, in 1998 the Ad Council was selected to manage the groundbreaking \$1 billion ONDCP media match program. Every \$1 ONDCP spent for anti-drug commercial spots had to be matched with \$1 of donated media for complementary messages that help keep kids away from drugs. This significantly increased the exposure of many Ad Council campaigns’ messages through donated media placement in highly rated time periods and within prime programming. Ad Council campaigns have received a combined total of more than \$35 million annually in donated broadcast time as an outcome of ONDCP’s “Media Match.”

MOVING BEYOND THE TRADITIONAL PSA

For much of the Ad Council’s history PSAs were available in specific formats for radio, television, print and outdoor advertising. Although, those media continue to be tremendously supportive of the Ad Council’s work, new technologies have introduced a variety of additional options for distribution of the Ad Council’s messages. The Ad Council has moved beyond the standard PSA by embracing new communications tools including the Internet, wireless communications, and interactive television. In 1998 the Ad Council developed a strong presence on the Internet both as an advertiser and a host. In just a few short years that presence grew significantly. In 2000, the Ad Council was continually cited as a consistent Top 25 Web Advertiser throughout the entire year, registering more than 1 billion impressions and earning an estimated online media value of \$65 million. In 2002, dollar values on the Internet had risen to an astounding \$172.3 million.



Today, Ad Council messages can also be seen at bus shelters, in the Yellow Pages, on taxi cab tops, as part of in-school programming and cinema advertising to name a few. Indeed, the partnerships that have been formed have yielded a myriad of opportunities to extend the Ad Council's messages.

Reader's Digest began running a special 40-page advertorial section devoted to the Ad Council's Commitment to Children in 1995. Each year, a portion of the proceeds from that section have been donated to the Ad Council.

On the one-year anniversary of the Columbine High School tragedy, the Ad Council launched its first PSA roadblock in collaboration with the National Campaign Against Youth Violence. On April 20, 2000, Ad Council PSAs addressing violence were run simultaneously by 35 broadcast and cable television networks, 200 local cable systems, 90 radio stations, 13 newspapers and three Internet companies.

The Ad Council has formed alliances with leading new media and Internet companies, helping distribute messages into cyberspace on thousands upon thousands of Web sites.

These partnerships grew from the need to think differently about our relationship with the media in a public service climate that has undergone enormous change. 60 years ago the Ad Council defined public service; now in the midst of vast changes in the media landscape, the organization is in a position to redefine it and has seized the opportunity for substantial gains in the public service sector.

RESEARCH:

The 50 campaigns on the Ad Council's docket make it as large as many major ad agencies. As such, the Ad Council faces many of the same research challenges that agencies face in understanding consumers, developing messages and tracking attitudes and behavior. However, because the Ad Council is dealing with social issues, rather than products, and with donated media, rather than purchased, the process can be much more challenging and the need for effective research tools even greater.

Research has helped the Ad Council to identify and understand its target audiences, test and improve the creative product and measure change in attitudes and behaviors over time. Most importantly, research has shown that PSAs work.



In June 1997 and May 1999, the Ad Council released two groundbreaking studies entitled Kids These Days: What Americans Really Think About The Next Generation. These studies tracked adults' attitudes toward kids and were a key initiative of our Commitment to Children. In 2000, the Ad Council partnered with the Pew Charitable Trusts and MTV to release Engaging the Next Generation: How Non-Profits Can Reach Young Adults, an unprecedented research-based manual aimed at helping non-profit organizations attract young adults to community service. In March 2001, the Ad Council released the results of a study of broadcast PSA Directors - those individuals responsible for selecting and airing PSAs at TV and radio stations. This in-depth qualitative and quantitative study allowed the organization to refine its media outreach efforts to ensure that its PSAs receive maximum media placement. In August 2001, the Ad Council launched a proprietary social issues tracking study with Millward Brown. This study is expected to provide rich data on more than twenty Ad Council campaigns, and will allow the Council to understand the relationship between donated media and the resulting fulfillment results, as well as attitudinal and behavioral changes. In May 2003, the Ad Council released the results of a study of print PSA Directors.



The Ad Council Affirms its

MISSION



OUR MISSION

Our mission is to identify a select number of significant public issues and stimulate action on those issues through communications programs that make a measurable difference in our society. To that end, the Ad Council marshals volunteer talent from the advertising and communications industries, the facilities of the media, and the resources of the business and non-profit communities to create awareness foster understanding and motivate action.

THE AD COUNCIL AFFIRMS ITS MISSION

In 1999, The Ad Council welcomed Peggy Conlon, former publisher of Broadcasting & Cable, as its fourth President & CEO. Peggy brought extensive media and technology expertise to the Ad Council as well as a strong belief in the organization's mission. Upon taking the helm, Ms. Conlon ably set the Ad Council's course toward the new century.

From the outset, Peggy took a hands-on approach with the inception of many new initiatives and goals. In just the first year under Ms. Conlon's leadership, 12 new campaigns were added to the campaign docket (assuring that the Ad Council was addressing the most pressing social issues). Another of Ms. Conlon's initiatives included expanding the Ad Council's media outreach department to focus on local media markets, exploring new partnership models involving networks, and continuing to develop each department to increase the organization's effectiveness. That increased effectiveness was apparent not only in the increased campaign docket and donated media value, but also in fundraising, which surpassed its goals by more than 20% in Conlon's first year.

By all accounts, the Ad Council was on track to continuing its mission into the new millennium and all departments were full steam ahead.

RETURNING TO OUR ROOTS

On the morning of September 11, 2001, the Ad Council was thrust back to its roots as a result of the tragic attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. Immediately aware of the organization's responsibility to serve the nation, the Ad Council answered the call. Within days, the Ad Council extended its hand to national non-profits, including the Red Cross, the Salvation Army and United Way, and offered to distribute their critical messages to the American people. For the first time in its history, the Ad Council was the sole signatory of two PSAs. The spots, "I am an American," and "Talk to Your Children," featuring First Lady Laura Bush, were on the air within days of 9/11 and the feedback from Americans the world over was unprecedented.

News reports and messages from the nation's leaders made it clear that Americans needed help to respond and recover, to heal and remain strong. On September 21, 2001, only 10 days after the attacks, representatives of the advertising industry, including board members, and association leaders, gathered at the Ad Council to determine the industry's response to 9/11. It was at that meeting that representatives of the industry elected the Ad Council to lead the way, as it had done nearly 60 years earlier.



Within weeks the Ad Council's Campaign for Freedom was established and messages designed to inform, involve and inspire Americans were developed and distributed to media outlets nationwide. Each message under this campaign would carry the theme of Freedom -- Freedom is our right; Freedom is at risk; and it is every Americans' right to defend Freedom. The tagline would become "Freedom: Appreciate it. Cherish it. Protect it."

Much of what was done in the first weeks of the campaign was made possible by the generous contributions of products and services from many dedicated Ad Council vendors, who, like most Americans at that time, rallied behind any and all efforts to keep the nation united and strong.

MARKING 60 YEARS

The attacks on New York and Washington came only a few months short of the 60th anniversary of the last attack on our soil, Pearl Harbor. This time the Ad Council was in place and able to serve the nation immediately. Ironically, the news media demonstrated great interest in the Ad Council's earliest efforts during World War II, and as a result "Loose Lips Sink Ships" and Rosie the Riveter were again in the news, but this time they appeared alongside "I am an American," and "Live Brave."

Having recently marked its 60th year, the organization is well aware of its expanded responsibility, but remains firmly committed to its traditional campaign docket. The year 2002 was again among the Ad Council's most successful media years to date, with a total of \$1.3 billion in donated media value. The radio industry continues to lead all media in donated time and space, yet the Internet industry's support shows the strongest gains. Ad Council PSAs are aired in prime time during some of the most watched programming. Additional media partnerships are affording Ad Council PSAs not only more exposure for its messages, but also better exposure in key time slots and major markets.



Audiences, media, and the issues that need addressing are changing faster than ever. As a result, the Ad Council is distributing its messages in more formats than ever.

The organization is working with agencies, broadcasters and publishers to tailor its PSAs to achieve increased reach and relevance in local ethnic communities. Moving beyond the traditional PSA, the Ad Council has produced long-form programming, multi-part prime-time cable series, advertorials and multi-media roadblocks. Add to this the constant media exposure made possible by the Internet, and Ad Council messages become virtually inescapable. Which is exactly what we need; because we can't change society's attitudes and behavior overnight. But more than 60 years of creating advertising that gets noticed, remembered and acted on has proven that we can make a difference.

BEYOND OUR BORDERS

The Ad Council has been emulated in other countries. In the 1960s the U.S. and Mexican Ad Councils held joint conferences and ran a campaign on mutual understanding between the countries. Former Ad Council chairman Bart Cummings made several trips to Australia when an advertising council was being organized there. The 50th anniversary of the original Ad Council was the 20th anniversary of the Japan Ad Council, and Ruth Wooden, the president of the U.S. Council, spoke at the anniversary in Tokyo. There she proposed a joint campaign on environmental protection to be waged in both countries. The campaign, prepared in Japanese and English by the international Dentsu agency, offered advice on preservation of water quality when it was introduced in Japan and the U.S. in 1994.

When the Berlin Wall came down in 1990 and hopes for freedom soared in Eastern Europe, the Ad Council offered its campaigns, knowledge and talents to help organize volunteer Ad Councils in countries that were becoming democratic societies. Since the break-up of the former Soviet Union, an Ad Council has been organized in Russia. The Ad Council has also shared its experience in communications regarding AIDS with the leadership of an advertising task force in the Ukraine as well as other countries from Belgium to Thailand. With initiatives for peace in the Mideast and privatization of the TV industry, the government and media community in Israel gave priority to an analysis of public service advertising in the annual Jerusalem Business Conference of 1993.



Visitors from other nations (most recently Kuwait and Poland) regularly call upon the Ad Council for information and guidance that could help them make a difference in their own countries. These requests further affirm the impact of the Ad Council.

Still, in many countries, public service messages are sponsored by the government and run as paid advertising. While the government is among the 10 largest advertisers in the United States (e.g. to recruit soldiers and sailors, sell seats on Amtrak and stamps at the Post Office), government is the single largest advertiser in many other nations, including Canada and Great Britain.

What it takes: Choice, freedom, volunteers

There appears to be a need for several essential beliefs in order for an Advertising Council to contribute on the same level and enjoy the same success as the Ad Council has in the United States. These include:

- A free and competitive press;
- A business sector that has come to assume, naturally and confidently, a major role in social responsibility;
- A conviction that individual opinion matters and that individual actions are at least as meaningful as those taken collectively;
- A tradition of volunteerism, individuals helping each other for the sake of service not reward.

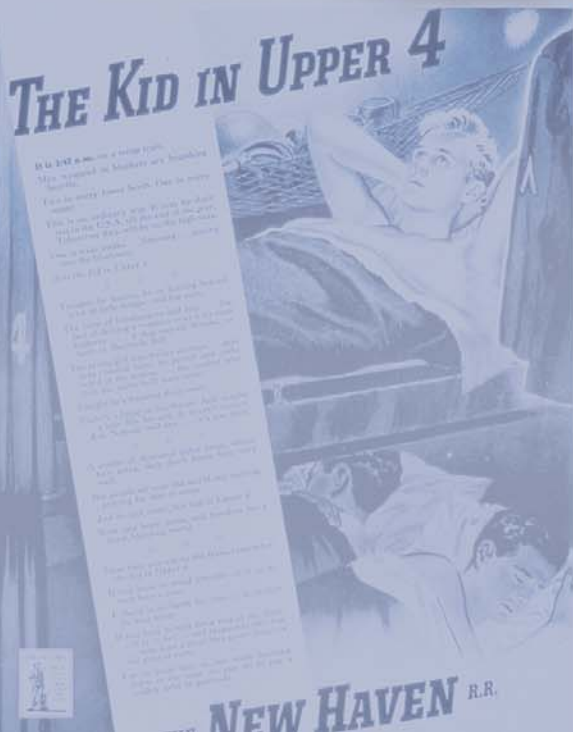
THE AD COUNCIL: A CELEBRATION OF FREEDOM

The Ad Council exists only because of the Bill of Rights, in particular, the First Amendment.

The First Amendment is often cited as the safeguard for free expression in advertising and The Advertising Council is a celebration of this amendment. The subject for celebration is not only the benefits that freedom of speech – political, commercial, editorial and individual – provides in the United States, but the inexorable extension of those benefits to other parts of the world. On first thought, advertising may seem a humble player for so noble a role. The individuals who conceived of advertising as capable in so many ways, large and small, of helping humanity when they organized this council many years ago showed a remarkable amount of foresight. The results that the Ad Council has been able to achieve are even more remarkable than the creative vision of its founders.



TIMELINE



1941 Advertisers, agencies and media associates call a crisis meeting to counter attacks on advertising. James Webb Young describes potential of advertising in serving people and social causes.

Japanese attack Pearl Harbor (December 7).

Ad Council planners called to Washington.

1942 Chester J. LaRoche, chairman of Young & Rubicam, becomes first Ad Council chairman.

Ad Council gets its first assignment from Archibald MacLeish, head of the Office of Facts and Figures: counteract hoarding of rubber, wool and sugar

Advertiser, agency and media associations give a total of \$100,000 to finance Ad Council's first year.

Ad Council offices open in Washington D.C. and New York. Miller McClintock, researcher and trade association executive, becomes executive director.

Name changes to The War Advertising Council.

The Ad Council, operating as part of the Office of War Information, projects it will develop \$13 million per year in war advertising messages.

1943 Womanpower campaign begins to help fill war jobs. Fifty percent of city households have Victory Gardens. Billions of dollars in War Bonds being sold.

Theodore Replier, formerly creative supervisor at Young & Rubicam, becomes executive director.

1944 War campaigns in high gear, at rate of \$100 million in media annually.

Smokey Bear is born in the art department at Foote, Cone & Belding, Los Angeles.

1945 Campaign against complacency as war ends in Europe.

President Truman echoes President Roosevelt's request that the Ad Council carry on in peacetime.

Victory over Japan (September 2).

Name reverts to The Advertising Council.

Work begins with the National Safety Council. Several war campaigns continue including U.S. Forest Service, Savings Bonds and American Red Cross. Campaigns begin for veterans' rights and housing.

1946 New campaigns focus on threat of atomic weapons, importance of world trade and tolerance among religious and ethnic groups.

1947 Ad Council reports that advertising valued at \$100 million was donated in 1946, three times expectations for a peacetime year.

Replier elected first president of the Council.

Public Policy Committee formed with Evans Clark of 20th Century Fund as first chairman.



- 1948** Industries Advisory Committee of corporate leaders is formed. Charles E. Wilson, “Electric Charlie” from General Electric, is first chairman. IRS defines Ad Council as an educational institution. Chairman Lee Bristol later calls it the “world’s largest educational foundation.”
- 1949** Cold War issues become prominent. Council publishes booklet on advertising as “A new weapon in the worldwide fight for freedom.”
- 1950** All five television networks begin to use Ad Council messages. Comic books also become a medium. Mrs. Roosevelt, General Eisenhower and New York’s Cardinal Spellman speak out in ads against Communist propaganda. With hostilities in Korea, Savings Bonds again become War Bonds.
- 1951** Crusade for Freedom campaign supports Radio Free Europe. Anti-Communist theme extends to campaign against prejudice: “Communism thrives on dissension,” says one ad, “management versus labor, Christian against Jew, White against Negro.” Rochester, N.Y. sets up a local Ad Council. Howard Morgens of Procter & Gamble organizes an allocation system to gain public service time on television. His Procter & Gamble predecessor, Neil McElroy had done the same earlier with radio.
- 1952** After just five weeks of advertising, the amount of blood sent to Korea increases from 9,537 to 60,000 pints.
- 1953** Ad Council sponsors live network radio and TV coverage of an atomic bomb test in Nevada. First annual Distinguished Public Service Award won by Charles E. Wilson, industrialist, government official and long-time leader at Ad Council.
- 1957** Fundraising for Hungarian relief follows Soviet invasion.
- 1958** Campaign begins for Salk vaccine against paralytic polio.
- 1961** Importance of TV network increases as the function of advertiser as program sponsor fades. President Kennedy in a USO ad makes the point that, “Winning in peace is a lonely battle” for those on guard duty in Korea and elsewhere.
- 1962** Peace Corps and Youth Fitness campaigns start.
- 1964** Automation demands technical training: “You won’t get tomorrow’s jobs with today’s skills.” Ad Council Washington Conference hears that deepening involvement in Vietnam will change national defense needs.
- 1965** Repplier retires as Ad Council president, succeeded by Robert P. Keim, vice president of Chase Manhattan Bank and earlier a campaign manager on Council staff.



- 1966 Equal Opportunity Jobs campaign through the Ford Foundations is based on need for minority employment.
- 1967 Whitney Young of National Urban League tells Ad Council to “Venture into some of the things that are really wrecking society.”
- 1968 New “Crisis in Our Cities” advertising hits hard at race-related issues: “Most kids live in cities. So do most rats.”
- 1969 Ambitious TV commercial brings together 100 celebrities and public figures singing “Let the Sun Shine In” for racial harmony in campaign for Urban Coalition.
- 1971 Campaigns are run for jobs for Vietnam veterans and on behalf of better conditions for American prisoners in Asia. Ad Council is criticized by those who want efforts focused on release.
Japanese Ad Council founded.
- 1972 United Negro College Fund campaign opens with theme, “A mind is a terrible thing to waste.”
- 1973 “Crying Indian” commercial against litter wins two Clio awards.
Planned Parenthood’s “Children by choice not chance” leads Ad Age list of 10 best public service ads.
- 1974 Whip Inflation Now campaign launched with blessing of President Ford. Democrats ask for equal time.
- 1976 Bicentennial year campaigns focus on Child Abuse, Older Persons (“Get off your rocker”) and the American Economic System. Ad Council rejects opportunity to do a Bicentennial campaign because it is not a hard-hitting subject.
- 1977 Campaign for swine flue immunization aborted at last minute for fear of health hazards.
- 1978 Ad Council takes on crime prevention. Here comes McGruff the Crime Dog.
- 1979 Biggest peacetime year for new campaigns. Issues include energy conservation, the Census, high blood pressure, anti-inflation, and direct deposit for Social Security checks.
- 1981 Campaigns hit drug abuse and offer help and hope to alcoholics. Jason Robards says, “I’m living proof you don’t have to die from a drink.”
- 1982 “Just Say No” to drugs, follows Nancy Reagan’s request at biannual Washington Conference.
- 1983 Eleven new campaigns in the works, including Ellis Island restoration, neighborhood housing and drunk driving prevention.
- 1986 Partnership for a Drug-Free America formed, directing all its efforts at a single issue.



- 1987** First billion dollar year for advertising donated to Ad Council causes.
Bob Keim retires after 21 years. Ruth A. Wooden, executive account director at N.W. Ayer advertising agency, is selected as their president of the Ad Council.
- 1988** Campaigns begin on AIDS education, recruiting teachers and recycling.
- 1989** Ad Council focuses on targeting its messages to specific interests of media, studies what they want in PSAs.
New campaign for recruiting nurses developed to tackle acute nursing shortage.
- 1991** Results of controlled tests on reactions to colon cancer commercial demonstrate that TV PSAs can save lives.
Ad Council and Partnership for a Drug-Free America report record total of \$1.35 billion in donated media for 1990.
- 1992** Fiftieth anniversary events include museum exhibits in New York, Washington, Chicago and Portland.
Ad Council charts new area of emphasis on children in pain or at risk: “Breaking the cycle of disadvantage.”
Racial troubles in South Central Los Angeles speed debut of anti-discrimination campaign. “Life’s too short. Stop the hate.”
- 1993** First Clinton administration contract awarded to Ad Council is for early childhood immunization.
- 1994** Offspring? Ad Councils forming in Russia and Thailand.
Smokey Bear, age 50, parades at Tournament of Roses after an earlier appearance in the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade.
- 1995** Council announces “Commitment 2000: Raising a Better Tomorrow,” its 10-year pledge to focus a majority of its resources on campaigns that benefit children.
- 1999** Peggy Conlon takes the helm as President & Chief Executive Officer
- 2000** First media roadblock – April 20, 2000
- 2001** Terrorist attacks on NYC and Washington, D.C. thrust Ad Council back to its roots
“I am an American” becomes first PSA campaign in which Ad Council is sole signatory
Campaign for Freedom announced
- 2002** Ad Council celebrates 60 years

