An Example of Hard Sell Advertising
by Kate McFarlin

There are two main types of advertising -- hard sell and soft sell. Soft sell advertising is subtle in its approach and allows the consumer time to think about the product’s benefits. Hard sell advertising is much more in-your-face, with enthusiastic sales people pushing the product or service. There probably is a time and a place for both types of advertising and with the right usage, hard sell advertising can be effective.

Car Sales

Car sales offer the perfect example of hard sell advertising. You walk into a dealership and immediately a sales person walks over to you and begins determining why you are there and what they can do to get you into a vehicle. Psychological ploys are used to help them in this process and it can be overwhelming for some buyers. Car sales people focus on the benefits of the vehicle, and don't take no for an answer. If you do manage to make it off the lot without buying something, be prepared for endless follow-ups until you do.

Infomercials

Infomercials are another notorious example of a hard sell. These program-length commercials are also focused on the benefits of a product and are strongly based in the "what's in it for me" philosophy of marketing. They mention the number to call several times throughout the ad spot, offer incentives to get consumers to call and you will also notice the repetition of the product name throughout the ad. This is done to literally drive home the point to the viewer's subconscious.

Furniture Stores

Much like car sales people, furniture sales people tend to be aggressive and will actively pursue their clients. Furniture sales also typically require a benefits-based approach and sales people are well versed in not taking no for an answer. This industry is also known for its aggressive follow-ups.
Consumers may often feel bullied into buying more furniture than they need, or higher priced pieces than they intended to purchase.

**Characteristics**

Hard sell advertising efforts share certain commonalities. They are aggressive, benefits-based and the products usually are not something that consumers need on a daily basis. Because luxury, high-ticket or superfluous items are harder to sell, a hard sell approach is often appropriate. Daily use products typically don't need to be marketed in this aggressive fashion since consumers know they need them and won't argue the point. When it comes to items that are harder to sell, it is necessary to be more aggressive and convincing.