

Advertising: Drugs

Prescription Drug Marketing & Advertising



INTRODUCTION

This web page is designed for educators who want their students to analyze prescription drug marketing via placement of advertisements in magazines.

In order for students to understand prescription drug marketing and advertising, they should have a solid knowledge of [media literacy concepts](#), [how to read an advertisement](#), and advertising's [techniques of persuasion](#).

Using the table of contents on the left you can locate a number of resources, including timely current events news articles about the issues covered here.

In addition, there is a large database of current drug ads found in mainstream magazines.

As the issue of prescription drug ads is controversial, you will find additional resources added to this site often, so please re-visit it.

Send me an email and let me know what you think of this resource:

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NEW: [AMA Calls for Ban](#) on TV & Magazine DTC Advertising (Nov. 2015)

RECOMMENDED VIDEO

[Big Bucks, Big Pharma-Marketing Disease & Pushing Drugs](#)



Non Sequitur comic is used here for educational purposes.

Key Quotes/Statistics:

By the numbers

Drug makers spent nearly \$5 billion on direct-to-consumer advertising in 2006, according to Nielsen Media Research, and a 2004 study found that American TV viewers watch an average of 30 hours of drug ads per year. ([Source](#))\$4.65-

billion Amount of consumer advertising spent by the pharmaceutical industry in 2005

\$5.29-billion Amount of consumer advertising spent by the pharmaceutical industry in 2006

\$4.20 Amount of additional sales each \$1 in advertising generates

16 Average number of hours of prescription drug advertising Americans see each year

[Sources:](#) TNS Media Intelligence, Kaiser Family Foundation, Journal of Health Communication

direct-to-consumer drug ads "have completely turned around the old relationship when the doctor was this godlike character and you used to go in there all deferentially." (media professor Robert Thompson quoted [here](#))

"The Kaiser Family Foundation found that every dollar drug companies spend on ads brings more than four dollars in additional sales." ([Source](#))

"16 million people had expressly requested prescription medicines from their doctors as a result of advertising" (Source [link](#))

When Merck spent over \$300 million to advertise its drug Vioxx, it created huge demand for the drug, which in turn led to as many as 140,000 heart attacks and strokes in the U.S., and 60,000 deaths. (from Commercial Alert [email](#))

