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### Reebok's Revolutionary Commercial

Many global sports brands entered Korea in the 1980's because Koreans became more interested in sports and two major international games were held in Korea - the Asian Games in 1986 and the Olympics in 1988. Although the market for sporting goods grew exponentially with the introduction of companies such as Adidas, Fila, Puma and others, Nike reigned supreme. For this reason, Reebok Korea launched a new commercial in 1989 that was completely different from any previous commercial. The Reebok commercial is well presented to attract Korean young men in their twenties.

In the beginning of the commercial, a group of dancers are warming up in a hallway. When the music stops, a man walks into a studio and dances energetically. He then jumps on a chair, performing a delicate balancing act. He continues dancing and leaping into the air, while the chair spins on the ground. The chair stops spinning, he stops dancing, and looks into the mirror. The commercial ends when the company's logo appears.

First of all, the sound techniques of the commercial are very effectively expressed to young adult men. One way is that the background music triggers a shift of scene. Specifically, the background music runs for only a brief time and stops. This pause creates anticipation that something is likely going to happen. Next, the sound effect maximizes the dynamics of the scene. As an example, silence prevails, and only the stamping sound of the dancer breaks the silence. This vibrant sound lets the viewer focus on the dancer's intense movement. Lastly, the

voiceover inspires confidence in the target audience. Unlike other commercials of that era, which have lengthy explanations of the product, this commercial has only a single word, which is “Reebok.” The voice actor states the company’s name in an imposing masculine voice. The young men viewing the commercial would associate that voice with the dancer, and they feel a longing to be rugged and bold like him. To be sure, the sound technique used by Reebok draws in and effectively persuades the target audience of young men in their twenties.

Next, the visual techniques of the commercial make young adult males wild with enthusiasm. To begin with, the strategy of contrasting color emphasizes the company’s intent. As an illustration, the actor wears a black sleeveless shirt with a white logo, black training pants, and white athletic shoes. What is more, the studio that is the background of the commercial is a muted brown. The white logo stands out well against black. The dull brown background implies stillness, while the performance by the dancer manifests dynamics. In addition, the audience empathizes with the actor. To illustrate, a handsome, well-built man comes into the picture. He not only dances vigorously, but he also succeeds in executing difficult moves. The young men watching will imagine that they can also be fit and athletic if they wear Reebok shoes and sportswear. Lastly, a calligraphic style of the company logo represents the unique fashion of the brand. Thus, Reebok designed the decorative font to attract hip and stylish young men as well as athletes. Overall, Reebok strongly illustrates the characteristics of their products.

Finally, the commercial through the persuasive techniques entralls young adult men. Reebok does not appeal to ethics, tradition, or logic in this commercial, but rather appeals purely to emotion. First, this Reebok commercial appeals emotionally to the rebelliousness of young male consumers through the use of an unusual character, which was never before seen on Korean television. Specifically, traditional Korean commercials always featured famous celebrities.

Furthermore, in traditional Korean culture, a dancer (especially a male dancer) was held in contempt as having a humble occupation. The public display of a man's body was regarded as an embarrassment as well. However, Reebok Korea broke with all tradition by hiring an unknown college student majoring in physical education and assigning this challenging role to him.

Thanks to his impressive physique and good looks, the commercial received a fervent response from not only young men but also young women. The commercial enlightened Koreans about the strong virile beauty of the male form as well as the artistic value of dancing. Second, the commercial appeals to the emotional desire of the audience for fun. For instance, when the dancer jumps on the chair and tilts it back with one foot, he maintains his balance and rides the chair to the ground. The public was so fascinated by this acrobatic maneuver that imitating the performance in Reebok shoes became a fad, particularly among teenage boys, and thousands of chairs were broken all over the country while imitating the actor. Lastly, this commercial used new advertising methods to rebrand Reebok's image by being fresh and different. For example, while typical sportswear commercials explain the item's selling points, the Reebok commercial does not mention a single word about the products, creating mystery, which is an important part of being cool. Also, unlike most commercials that feature the product and logo prominently, the product in this commercial is not placed in the center throughout the entire commercial.

Reebok's symbol on his shoes can be seen within a corner of the picture at the beginning of the commercial, and its logo on his shirt also can be observed sparingly. Reebok used these novel techniques to successfully implant a new image in the public's mind. Therefore, Reebok was no longer an ordinary brand, but turned out to be an extraordinary brand among the young. As mentioned, the differentiated strategy of Reebok is very clever to appeal to the target audience's emotion.

The visual, sound, and persuasive techniques are very successful in attracting Korean young men. Firstly, the sound technique in the Reebok commercial intensifies the feeling of tension in order to attract the target consumer's attention. Secondly, the visual technique expresses the merit of the product metaphorically. Thirdly, the differentiated strategy of Reebok excites the public's emotion as well as that of the target audience, resulting in its exploding popularity. For these reasons, Reebok gained both prestige and public interest in Korea through the novel commercial. The ordinary college student, who played the part of the dancer, also became an established star thanks to the commercial. Although more than 20 years have passed, he is still an effective spokesperson for Reebok because he maintained a wholesome image and fit body. As a result of the popularity, Reebok Korea launched an updated version of the commercial in 2013 to revive the sensational debut in 1989.

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Work Cited

Reebok Athletic Shoes. Commercial. *YouTube*. 14 Oct. 2013. Web.