

Making technical advertising relevant



By [Ann Druce](#)

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Open any technical journal and, with a few exceptions, the advertising is dire. The company logo is usually right at the top, highlighting the real problem: the advertiser thinks their ad is all about them.

This is probably why technical ads so often include every possible detail about the company, regardless of its relevance. There may be detailed product specs for several products, a mention of associated companies and too many photos (usually too small to be seen). It's as though an entire company profile or product manual has been edited down to a full page ad.

And then there is the address panel: both postal and physical addresses are included (naturally), for every branch office (to prove how big we are), GPS co-ordinates (to show we are high-tech), fax numbers (just in case) and international dialling codes (to imply we operate globally).

Lost in the clutter

And the real gems of information that might convince their target market are either lost in the clutter or missing entirely. Instead of identifying one single-minded, relevant message they make vague promises about years of experience and turnkey solutions.

In fact, while I'll confess having used it myself, I've decided I'd like to ban the word "solutions" from all technical advertising. In a recent copy of an engineering journal, six of the first 14 ads included this word - five of them in their headline or payoff line. And the sixth had "solve" in their headline instead. (However, they had managed to sneak "solutions" into their company name!)

Falling into the trap of making generic promises of leadership, integrated solutions and product innovation, these ads fail to deliver a differentiated message, support it with evidence to build credibility or stand apart from the opposition. And miss the opportunity to profit from hard-hitting advertising.

ABOUT ANN DRUCE

I help clients define and execute digital marketing strategies, to make a real contribution to achieving their business goals.

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