ADVERTISING ETHICS

• With the fast expansion of Integrated Marketing Communication now – a days advertising has emerged as a most demanding & challenging business industry. Advertising plays an important role by creating primary demand for the product or service and its usage rate thus increase in customers. It not only stimulates the product distribution but also builds brand preferences and loyalty.

• It also reduces the time between the purchases & persuades the consumers to try various new products in the market.

• Advertising is a persuasive promotional tool especially for companies whose products & services are targeted at mass consumer markets.

• Advertising Industry have been facing a lot of criticism in the recent times as the advertising practices have not always been ethical.

• Advertisements should be socially, culturally and morally ethical.

• In today's competitive market, it is free for all, thus advertisers are sometimes following the unethical practices to fight the competition.

• For many years, the advertising industry has practiced, promoted voluntary self regulation.

• Most advertisers and media recognize the importance of maintaining consumer trust and confidence. The circle of self-regulation in advertising is widening day by day.

• Ethics means "Good Conduct" or "Conduct which is right in view of the society and the time period".

• By common consent, various modes of behavior and conduct are viewed as "good" or "bad".

• Ethics are moral principles and value that govern the actions and decisions of an individual group. Ethics is a choice between good and bad, between right and wrong.

• It is governed by a set of principles of morality at a given time and at a given place and in a given society.

• Ethics is related to group behavior in ultimate analysis, thus setting norms for an individual to follow in consistence with the group norms.

• A particular action may be within the law and still not be ethical; • Target Marketing is a good example for this.

• The alcoholic – beverage companies promote their brands & target not only college students but underage drinkers as well in Western countries.

• These advertisements have increased alcohol related problems. Advertisements exposing pornography is another serious issue in advertising industry today.

• Advertisements promoting permissiveness & objectifying women are heavily criticized in the society.

• In today's competitive and buyer's market, an advertisement have to be truthful and ethical. If an advertisement is misleading, the credibility of the organization is lost.

• To view the truth in advertisement, it has to be seen from to consumer's point of view rather than from legal point.

• The advertising industry has been frequently criticized for putting out misleading or exaggerated claims in respect of product, goods and services advertised.

• It is also perceived as guilty of glorifying certain habits or tendencies regarded as undesirable and encouraging consume rest culture.

• It is very difficult to demarcate a clear line of difference between what is true and what is untrue.

• But the advertisement as such is judged by its impact, and by its acceptance by the consumers.

• The product must fulfill its advertised claims. Advertisements should be decent and not be obscene. It must be truthful. Gambling is also unethical.

• Advertising is a social process, thus it must follow the time-tested norms of social behavior and should not affront our moral sense.

• Ethics are rules of conduct or principles of morality that point us towards the right or best way to act in a situation.

• Ethics vary from person to person, society-to-society point of view.

Social criticism and responsibility of advertising

• Advertising made mass selling possible. Advertising is Omni present. Advertising creates brand for the products or services advertised.

• It allies, invites and involves consumers along with itself. To creates images for the products advertising professionals uses variety of things like drama, music, action, romance, emotion, sex, animated & functions characters and so on.

• It not only invites consumer's to try their products or services but also invite public criticism.

• Much of the controversy stems from the ways many companies use advertising as a selling tool and from its impact on society's tastes, value and lifestyles.

• Advertising contributes to have both negative & positive influence on society.

• It is criticized for encouraging materialism, manipulating consumer to buy things they do not need; stereotyping, fraudulent & so on.