

Laura Boercker
Professor Smith
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Going For Glamour

American society is visual. Throughout a typical day Americans see and hear advertisements on television, billboards, newspapers, magazines, and on the radio. Advertisers have the difficult task of reaching the largest number of people to boost overall sales of their products. While some advertisements appeal to a large group of diverse ages and cultures, others appeal to a smaller target audience. One such ad is for the Mercury Milan. This advertisement utilizes custom-tailored images and text to appeal to the readers of *Glamour*.

The readers of *Glamour* are sophisticated, and lead (or hope to lead) a sophisticated lifestyle. They value money, luxury, fashion, and style, and have moderate disposable income. The type of woman who reads *Glamour* is interested in looking her best no matter what she is doing; style is incorporated into all aspects of her life. When considering the VALS™ system, *Glamour's* readership falls into two main categories: achievers, and experiencers. Although the readership falls primarily into these two categories, the group that fits the readership the most is the achievers who “favor established, prestige products and services that demonstrate success to their peers” (“The VALS Segments”). Overall, readers of *Glamour* can range from a poor college student, to a successful executive CEO.

The text on the page appeals to the readers of *Glamour* specifically because it plays with the importance of style, and the reader's need to feel stylish. The top of the ad

reads, “Inspired by her stylish new Mercury Milan, Tina did what anyone else in her shoes would do—buy new ones.” The text at the top of the ad has two possible meanings: 1) it plays with the idea that Tina needed to go out and buy new shoes so her level of personal style would match her new, stylish car, or 2) she saved so much money by purchasing the Milan that she had a ton of money left over to go shoe shopping with. The text at the bottom of the ad also relates directly to the reader’s sense of style, and constant need to be stylish. It reads, “Milan’s eye-catching style and two-tone leather seats gave Tina ample reason to add to her shoe collection; not that Tina ever needed reasons. The big question now is whether her closet will hold as much as Milan’s trunk.” The ad’s copy playfully toys with the stereotype that women love shopping, and have a huge shoe collection. Readers of *Glamour* would appreciate the playful and clever way the Mercury Milan is presented, and would place themselves in Tina’s “shoes” considering for a moment whether they are stylish enough to drive a Milan. The last text worth mentioning is Mercury’s slogan, “New Doors Opened,” which plays on the idea that purchasing the Milan will lead to new, thrilling possibilities.

The words in the ad are carefully chosen, and so are the images. Once again, the images on the page tell us a great deal about who the *Glamour* reader is, and what they value. The main image is a close up shot of the Milan, which is parked curbside at the strip of urban stores “Tina” likes to shop at. We can tell that the car is in a city/urban setting because there are no trees, and there are people strolling down the sidewalk. From this image, we can tell that “Tina” (and by extension, the *Glamour* reader) is a city girl. The top left images are smaller and less prominent, but still tell us a great deal about the target audience of the ad. The first is a shot of the new, stylish pair of wedge sandals Tina

is going to try on. The second image is a full-length shot of Tina looking at herself in the mirror with the shoes on, and the third shows Tina's hand on the Milan's stick shift. The image in the middle is the most telling. It shows Tina, in a white, peach, and coral sundress, admiring the shoes. From this image, we can tell that Tina is African-American, and is in good shape. *Glamour* readers not only value the style of their clothing and shoes, they also value health and fitness (as a part of overall beauty). Tina would be far less glamorous if she were overweight. The creators of the advertisement want the readers of *Glamour* to aspire to be like Tina, stylish and attractive. The fact that Tina represents a minority, may urge *Glamour's* minority readers to strive for success and style—the image portrays an ideal for all races of women. Throughout the advertisement, Tina is shown alone. Her boyfriend (if she has one) is not shopping with her, and this appeals to the independent, modern readers of *Glamour*. Tina does not have a problem shopping alone; in fact, she thoroughly enjoys the independence of not having a man with her.

The last images worth mentioning are the bottom left image of Tina happily driving her new Milan, and the smaller image of the car in motion. Tina is happy with her new shoe purchase, and her car. The images act as a storyline starting with Tina's trip to the store, and ending with images of her driving away. From these images, we can make the argument that Tina's life is active. She is healthy (probably goes to the gym), and is constantly “on the go.” Readers of *Glamour* want what Tina has, success, money, beauty, and enough disposable income to purchase a closet full of new clothes and shoes.

Overall the Mercury Milan ad utilizes very clever images and text to entice the modern, successful, stylish readers of *Glamour*. When reviewing the ad, readers place themselves in Tina's shoes, and hope to embody/achieve her level of success and style.

Works Cited

Mercury Milan. Advertisement. *Glamour* Jan. 2006: 15.

“The VALS™ Segments.” SRI Research Online. 8 Nov 2006 <<http://www.sricbi.com/VALS/types.shtml>>.

INSPIRED BY HER STYLISH NEW MERCURY MILAN, Tina did what anyone else in her shoes would do — buy new ones.



Starting at \$18,995 MSRP*



Introducing the all-new 2006 Mercury Milan. Milan's eye-catching style and two-tone leather seats** gave Tina ample reason to add to her shoe collection; not that Tina ever needed reasons. The big question now is whether her closet will hold as much as Milan's trunk.

*As shown: 2006 Mercury Milan V-6 Premier with available features. MSRP \$24,990. Tax, title and registration fees extra. **Available leather-trimmed seats.



MERCURY | NEW DOORS OPENED

mercuryvehicles.com

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