

It's Elementary.

Anthony Element

It Pays to Advertise... Or so they say

Yesterday, I was patronized, yelled at, assumed to be stupid and talked down to. Happened the day before too. If you own a tv set, chances are you copped a bit of the same treatment. I'm talking about advertisers.

I've never actually met one, but judging by what they produce, I figure they must be a very unusual breed. Around 147,000 different insurance companies want me to buy one their funeral plans, so every single one of them starts out by letting me know they think I'm too stupid to handle "complicated forms".

Well that's going to do it, right there. Not!

Then they imply that I'm scared of "nasty blood tests" too. From where in the world did they get the idea that patronising we... er... seniors is going to make us want to buy their plan? Listen up insurance floggers, if I'm old enough to be thinking about funeral plans, trust me, I've already been jabbed and sucked often enough to know it's nothing to be scared of.

Hang on, that doesn't sound quite the way I intended it to.

Next they compare the weekly plan cost, (they call it an "Investment". Riiiggght, an investment I pay into for the rest of my life but the return doesn't kick in until after I'm dead, WTF?), anyway, apparently the 'investment' per week is no more than a cup of coffee.

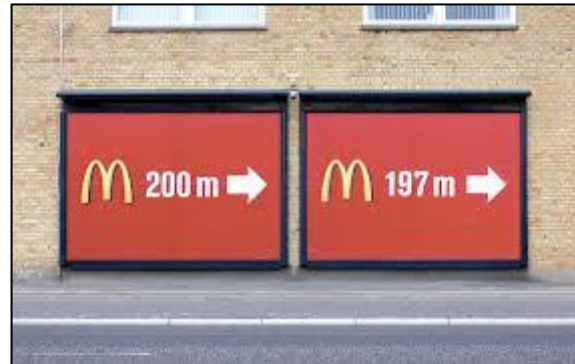
Two points. First, they're paying way too much for their coffee, and second, coffee gives me immediate and major gratification. Hell, right after a cup of coffee is probably the best I'm going to feel all day. And they're comparing that with something that gives gratification to someone else, after I've deperched. No wonder they're struggling to sell it.

What we have here is a serious case of false equivalence. Coles think that a big red hand with the finger pointing down will get my attention. Well, I suppose it could be worse, the finger could be pointing up. A different message entirely.

Just diverging a minute, I've always liked the Budget Car ad where the girl sings the Budget song with a cute French accent. So what do the idiots do? They replace her with a couple of weird aliens. (*I agree - tb*) They don't do it for me; can't explain why. They just don't. You wonder what the thought process was going on in the creative department: Alien cartoon characters, or cute French chick, alien cartoon characters or cute French chick. Gee, I don't know... Tough call.

I mean, it's not like six year olds hire cars.

And you've gotta love this strategy of targeting kids. Can't reach the parents? No problem, just turn the kids into nagging little sales rugrats. McDonalds have done this for years, and they figured out that even kids aren't that interested in a cheeseburger, a coke and fries. So now they sell Happy Meals by convincing the kids they can't live without the plastic toy, and, oh by the way, they get a burger and the other bits thrown in. Never mind that the toy has a higher nutritional content than the burger and fries. Plus it's non-fattening. By the way, did you know those grill marks on your burger aren't real. They were put there by the factory. Mmmmmmm, taaaasty!



I wonder where they got the idea that I might buy a Mazda once I know that it goes Vrooom, Vrooom! I haven't connected Vrooom Vrooom with a car since I was five years old with a dinky toy. Meanwhile, Kia have an ad out now that features some dude pretending to balance a soccer ball on his head. Sorry Kia people, you're going to have to be just a tad more specific.

On the subject of cars, I occasionally ask myself how many people saw the chicken jumping in the air and said to themselves, "Right, that settles it, got to get me one of them there Toyotas."



One ad I can see the sense in is those mini billboards above urinals in shopping malls, advertising condoms. That's sensible. I mean, as long as I have it in hand anyway...At Carindale Mall, they have the condom ad and right beside it is an ad for those drops you put in tired eyes. That kinda makes sense too, when you think about it.

I can see where if things work out well with the condom you might have tired eyes the next day. I was doing a bit of research for this piece and I came across the website of a major national advertising and marketing company. It had a list of the top twenty things you can do to lift your brand image. Number 20 was, wait for it – **Have Great Products and Services**. No kidding. I guess it never occurred to them to make that No 1 and then forget the other nineteen.

Advertising to mass markets became popular in the U.S. over a century ago. And for almost that long, researchers have been studying whether advertising works. Professor Gerard Tellis at University of Southern California and his associates summarized the findings from hundreds of prior studies through a method called "meta-analysis." This approach ascertains the average effect of advertising in past studies and why it varies across contexts. What did they find out? Well, here's the key takeaway:

The effect of advertising is quite small – a one percent increase in advertising expenditures leads to 0.1 percent increase in sales or market share.



In other words, the sales return to advertising is 1/10th of its input in terms of expenditures. So on the strength of that, you'd have to say the answer to the question is: not very well.

I just hope the advertisers never find out or we might have to start paying for our free to air TV. And who wants to have to pay to patronized, yelled at, assumed to be stupid and talked down to?

A bloke says to his mate, have you ever hunted a bear,
his mate says, no but I've fished in my undies.

Vietnam Museum.

The National Vietnam Veterans Museum (NVVM) is a unique Museum. Founded and built by Vietnam veterans to help and support veterans to cope better with their experiences during the Vietnam War (1962-1975) and after their return to Australia, the NVVM seeks to remember, interpret and relate the experience of the veterans of the Vietnam era and the enduring impact of the war on society.

The museum was opened on its current site at Newhaven on the popular tourism destination of Phillip Island, Victoria, in March 2007. This followed a decade of development arising from a towed display touring Australia under the auspices of the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia. It is the largest and most comprehensive museum of its kind in Australia, founded and built by Vietnam veterans, family members and other volunteers. Following the recent completion of a museum Master Plan, the museum now has a roadmap to take its development to 2025.



Phillip Island is 140 klms south of Melbourne, about a 1¼ hour's drive on a good multi-lane highway.

The Museum, which has four ground floor galleries, the Remembrance and Valour Gallery plus separate Air, Ground and Sea Operations galleries, continues to evolve and can thank Gary Nolan for its existence as he was one of the instigators in getting it underway.



The Remembrance and Valour Gallery.

A recent addition to the Remembrance and Valour Gallery is a plinth which will be the centrepiece for remembering the contribution not just of Australia, but the other 'Free World' forces which supported the Republic of Vietnam. National flags for the RVN, USA, Australia, New Zealand, Korea, Thailand and the Philippines will be shown on the plinth, along with plaques giving some detail of the contribution in personnel and casualties suffered. The plinth should be completed by Vietnam Veterans' Day 2014. An emotional artefact has also been recently installed – a childhood golliwog carried by a medic in Vietnam, who was subsequently lost to his mother when he died less than 10 years after returning from Vietnam.

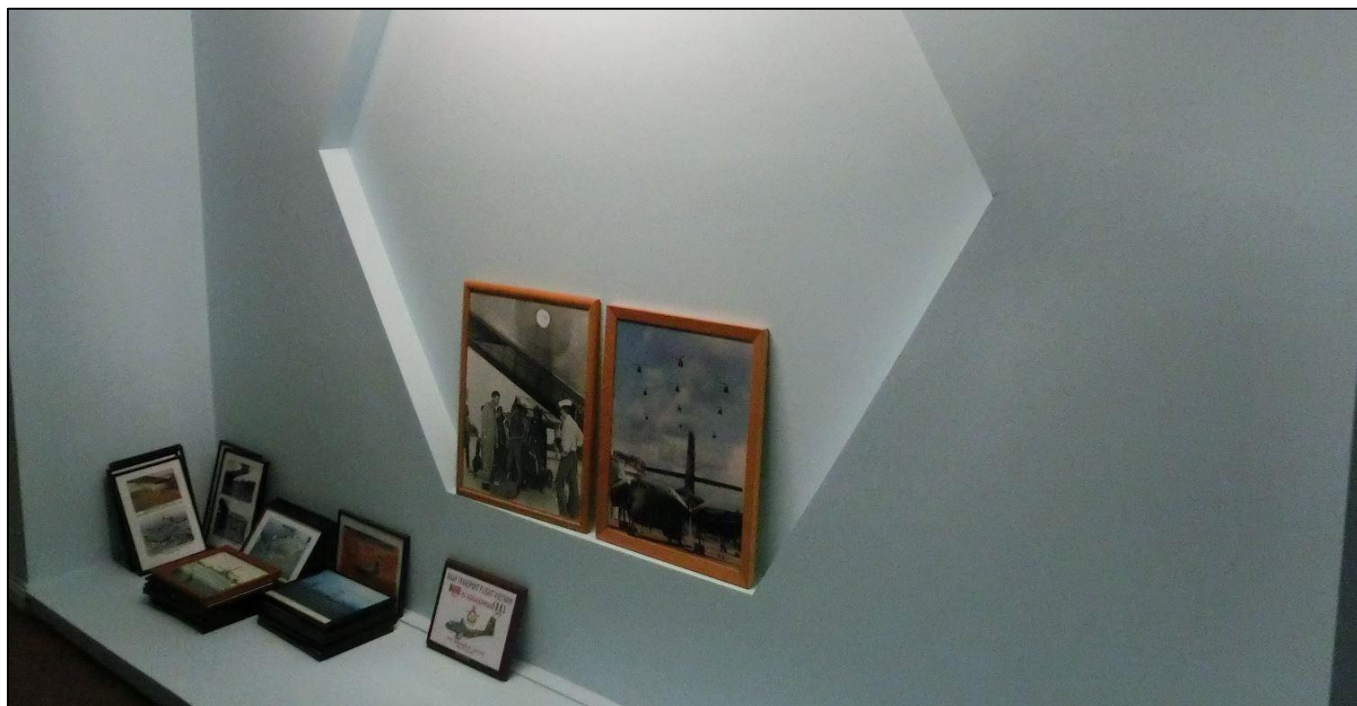
The Ground Operations Gallery has seen the addition of a touch screen display in the Australian Army Training Team exhibit and several new digital picture frames including for the 1 RAR Group, 4 RAR, 5 RAR, Provost, 131 Divisional Locating Battery and 8th Field Ambulance. New interpretive panels for 1 RAR, 131 Div Loc Bty, and Provost are with the designers to finalise layout before printing and installing. Concept drawings for a new, life sized tunnel diorama have been created and it is hoped to have this completed for the visit by the 1 RAR Group reunion in October 2014.

Discussions are also underway to begin planning for another life sized diorama – this time to convert one side of the Huey to a full recreation of the Vampire landing pad in Vung Tau, showing a casevac arrival. This will be complemented by the new interpretive panel wall for 2nd

and 8th Field Ambulance and display case showing a mannequin in full nurse's uniform, another great donation to the museum recently. The nurse exhibit should be in place by mid-2014.

Work has also begun for the development of a new exhibit area devoted to the Viet Cong /North Vietnamese Army – partly including the new tunnel diorama but also a new display case showing a life-size Viet Cong soldier.

There will also be an area devoted to the RAAF's contribution to the war, this area will be dedicated to the work carried out by 35Sqn



The MIA Remembrance Bracelets



When Australian ground forces left South Vietnam in 1972 they left behind 6 of their members who were classified as "Missing in Action".

In an act of solidarity with Australian Vietnam Veterans, the US Vietnam Vets Association presented the museum with 6 handcrafted remembrance bracelets to be displayed in the Museum in individual boxes.

Over the period 2007 to 2012 the remains of the 6 MIAs were locate and returned to Australia. As this occurred, the box for each serviceman was closed to symbolise their return.

Click the pic below to see the current President, Gary Parker describing how and when the bracelets were put on display at the Museum.



The Ground Operations Gallery with the Remembrance Bracelets centre stage.



Part of the Aviation gallery, this old Canberra definitely needs an E before she's going anywhere.



Left to right, Geoff Spackman and past Museum CEO, Gary Parker.

These two old codgers joined the Army back January 1960 as young appies and were posted to the long gone Balcombe barracks (on the Peninsula, south of Melbourne) and passed out in 1962 as qualified



plumbers. Geoff was posted to the Australian Logistics Support Company/17th Construction Squadron and sent to Vietnam in 1965 to establish the living quarters for the troops. On his return to Australia he was sent back to Balcombe as an instructor and stayed there until he took a discharge from the Army in 1969, moved to the ACT and established a successful plumbing business.

Gary went a different route, after appy school he was commissioned and he too was posted to 17th Construction Squadron in Vietnam in December 1969, but as a Captain – which meant he didn't have to get his hands dirty and as Geoff says, he'd already done all the work anyway. Gary stayed on in the Army for some years, finally retiring as a Major.

Both are now old codgers and are retired, Geoff is still in Canberra while Gary is on Phillip Island, not far from the Museum.

If you're in Melbourne and you've got the time and especially if you had a tour of Vietnam, you should check out the Museum. It is open from Wednesday to Monday from 10.00am - 5.00 pm and open 7 days a week during school holidays.

Costs are:

Adults	\$15.00
Child (5-15 years)	\$10.00
Family (2 Adults, 3 Children)	\$40.00
Concession/Aged Pensioners /Vietnam Veterans	\$12.00
Pre-booked Groups	\$10.00 per head
Pre-booked School Groups	\$8.00 per head

Contact details are: 25 Veterans Drive, Newhaven, Phillip Island, VIC. 3925
Phone 03 5956 6400

Why do people constantly return to the refrigerator with hopes that something new to eat will have materialized?

'Using slave labour is never a good idea'

Elmer Beneliner was a navigator in a B-17 during WW2. He tells the story of a World War 2 bombing run over Kassel, Germany, and the unexpected result of a direct hit on their bomber's fuel tanks.

Our B-17 was barraged by flack from Nazi anti-aircraft guns. That was not unusual, but on this particular occasion our fuel tanks were hit. Years later, as I reflected on the miracle of a 20 millimeter shell piercing the fuel tank without touching off an explosion,



our pilot, Bohn Fawkes, told me it was not quite that simple.

On the morning following the raid, Bohn had gone down to ask our crew chief for that shell as a souvenir of unbelievable luck. The crew chief told Bohn that not only just one shell but 11 had been found in the fuel tanks...11 unexploded shells where only one was sufficient to blast us out of the sky. Even after 35 years, the event leaves me shaken, especially after I heard the rest of the story from Bohn.

He was told that the shells had been sent to the armourers to be defused. The armourers told him that intelligence had picked them up. They could not say why at the time but Bohn eventually sought out the answer.

Apparently when the armourers opened each of those shells they found no explosive charge. They were all clean as a whistle and just as harmless. Empty? Not all of them! One contained a carefully rolled piece of paper. On it was a scrawl in Czech. The Intelligence people scrounged the base for a man who could read Czech and eventually they found one to decipher the note.

Translated the note read “This is all we can do for you now.”

Roger Bailey sent us this story, he says it was on page 23 of the April 2014 edition of ‘Commando News.’

Why do people run over a piece of string a dozen times with their vacuum cleaner, then reach down, pick it up, examine it and then put it down to give the cleaner one more chance?

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