TO: Professor Grigelevich and Professor Greco  
FROM: James, Angel, Kareem, and Antonio  
DATE: 4/16/2012  
SUBJECT: Advertising Demographics  
  
INTRODUCTION - James Curry  
  
The topic we have been researching as a group is how advertising is effecting certain demographics. We have chosen to focus on different groups and different things that are being advertised. For example, we have covered for-profit colleges and how they target misguided individuals luring them into spending money they do not have on a near worthless education. This topic is important for many reasons and is a widespread issue that people need to be informed of. The reason it is so important is because every day we are smothered will a different forms of advertising. While riding the subway the walls of both the stations and cars are covered in advertisements, the TV shows we watch have subliminal advertising and the commercials themselves are forced upon us. Many companies take advantage of how impressionable people are by targeting certain age groups and ethnic groups. Watching any day time TV station will allow a viewer to see advertisements for for-profit colleges or other training institutions that are aimed towards unemployed and under educated people. With promises of financial aid and a "guaranteed" job after graduation those individuals being targeted are likely to fall for the advertising tricks of for-profit colleges. It is not just for-profit schools that we are focusing on; we are also looking at the way clothing companies advertise to potential consumers and whether or not the way they go about it is can be viewed as ethical. This is an issue that is relevant now more than ever especially with the current state of the economy. It is essential that people are educated on the way companies advertise to their target groups so that they do not fall victim to false promises or over priced low quality goods. Our main goal through our research is to educate and inform people on the potential risks they may face due to false advertising and whether or not companies are advertising their services and goods in an ethical manner.  
  
FINDINGS: James Curry  
  
For-profit colleges are often times organizations offering programs in various career fields that do not require a full four year degree to obtain a career in. Some programs that for-profits offer are, dental assisting, medical assisting, massage therapy, culinary arts, and many other different types of majors. While the education in itself may be beneficial it is the way the for-profit colleges advertise their programs that is detrimental to nearly all attendees of these schools. In an article written by Mary Beth Marklein, she describes a student that attended a for-profit institute, Everest College. This student had graduated from Everest with a 3.9 GPA and was accepted to a pre-med major at a state university. Everest had promised her that all of her credits would transfer and that she would seamlessly be able to continue on with her education. Unfortunately, the recruiters from the school did not inform her that none of their promises were true and that she would be left with a thirty thousand dollar bill for a degree that she would not be able to continue working on (USAtoday.com), This story is an alarming idea that many people need to take notice of. For-profit college attendance has been skyrocketing in recent years mainly due to the economy, need for education, and the flexibility and ease of attendance the schools offer. I personally know someone who graduated from ITT tech with a degree in industrial design and was unable to transfer any of his credits or even find a job in his field because a proper four year degree was a necessity to obtain employment. The school had guaranteed that all of his credits would transfer to a comparable program at Wentworth, while at the time that may have been true the school told him after WIT would not accept him that their "transfer agreement" had changed and there was nothing else that the would be able to do for him. After watching several clips on YouTube of commercials for various for-profit colleges it does explicitly state that "some or all credits may not be transferable to an accredited institute". That way of advertising in a way is not unethical because they do in fact inform the viewer and potential student right away that credits may not be of any use if they are looking to transfer. What is unethical though is the countless horror stories of students who were told false promises that they would be able to transfer their credits. Here is an example of a commercial from ITT technical institute, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s2n_bzoHf9k>, at the very end of the commercial it does in fact say "credits are unlikely to transfer". It's obvious what the point of the commercial is right after watching it. ITT tech is showing an accomplished United States Marine Corps veteran and his happy family which they most likely believe to be all due to the education he received at ITT. Veterans are unfortunately a target of for-profit schools ever since the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Reason being is that the Post 9/11 G.I. bill, a bill that allows veterans to attend college for nearly free thanks to their service, has reached a worth of over nine billion dollars. For-profit schools, like the University of Phoenix, have marketed themselves as "military friendly" in order to take advantage of the G.I. bill. Veterans often choose schools like Phoenix because of their ease of attendance, mostly online classes, and the wide range of programs that they offer. Veterans may be more apt to choose internet courses because of different factors like PTSD or feeling out of place at a college with students much younger than themselves.