



# Semiotic Analysis On Apple iPad Pro's YouTube Ad Titled "Crush! | iPad Pro | Apple!"

Shinta Hartini Putri<sup>1</sup>, Achwan Noorlistyo Adi<sup>2\*</sup>, Mada Ramadan<sup>3</sup>,  
Salman Misbah Ibrahim<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1,2,3,4</sup> Communication Science Study Program, Faculty of Communication and Design,  
Universitas Informatika dan Bisnis Indonesia, Bandung, West Java, Indonesia  
achwannoorlistyo@unibi.ac.id

**Abstract.** Technology companies continue to innovate and present new products that can meet people's needs and lifestyles. This is Apple's goal to innovate regarding its newest product, namely the iPad. To disseminate the latest information, Apple communicates to the public through advertising. This research analyzes the Apple iPad Pro YouTube advertisement entitled "Crush! | iPad Pro | Apple". The advertisement became controversial because it showed a scene where all the artistic instruments were destroyed and replaced with an iPad, which triggered a negative response from the audience. Therefore, Roland Barthes's semiotic analysis was used in this qualitative research to determine whether the meaning of the message in the advertisement was appropriate or not. The purpose of this research is to find out the true meaning of the information conveyed by Apple in the advertisement. The research results show that the denotative meaning of each scene in the advertisement is the destruction of conventional art tools, while the connotative meaning of the advertisement is the digitization of conventional art tools and Apple is trying to position the iPad Pro as a revolutionary tool that can replace traditional art tools and simplify the creative process. However, this interpretation was received negatively by audiences, who felt that the advertisement downplayed the value and importance of conventional artistic instruments.

**Keywords:** Semiotic, Advertising, Apple, iPad Pro, Crush.

## 1 Introduction

Technology has become one of the integral parts of modern human life. This encourages technology companies to continue to innovate and present their latest products that can meet the needs and lifestyles of the community. One of the increasingly popular products is tablets, which offer a variety of features and functions that appeal to users. One of the leading tablet companies, Apple, recently launched an ad for their latest iPad Pro product titled "Crush".

This ad features the latest iPad Pro with excellent performance thanks to the first M4 chip. Equipped with a breakthrough Ultra Retina XDR display. And the most important thing is that it is present in the thinnest Apple product today. But there are a lot of pros and cons in this advertisement.

© The Author(s) 2025

R. Hurriyati et al. (eds.), *Proceedings of the 9th Global Conference on Business, Management and Entrepreneurship (GCBME 2024)*, Advances in Economics, Business and Management Research 342,  
[https://doi.org/10.2991/978-94-6463-817-2\\_28](https://doi.org/10.2991/978-94-6463-817-2_28)

Quoted from the Instagram account @garistemu.co "iPad Pro ads are considered less sensitive to creative workers", this is a support to strengthen this analysis because not all audiences can receive it well. Advertising has an abstract nature, and one of them is an advertisement made by Apple, which is an advertisement that has an indirect sign. Where abstract has a fairly clear meaning even though it cannot be interpreted clearly.

Semiotic analysis can help in understanding the meaning contained in an advertisement. Semiotics is a science that studies signs and meanings. In the context of advertising, tags can be images, sounds, text, or other visual elements used to convey a message to an audience [1]. states that semiotics is a field that investigates the structure, types, typology, and relationships between signs in the use of society. Applied semiotics has many fields. In a sense, mass media, advertising, nonverbal signs, films, comics, literature, music, and culture are some of the many applied fields of semiotics [2].

Semiotic analysis can help to delve into a meaning that goes beyond one of Apple's ads titled "Crush! | iPad Pro | Apple". As stated by Roland Barthes, namely *signifiers* and *signifieds*. Usually the audience only knows the meaning thoroughly, but when it is analyzed, there are many denotations, connotations, onces and mythical meanings [3]. In addition, researchers look at how these ads attempt to communicate a specific message to the audience. Semiotic analysis can also help to understand how these ads work to manipulate the emotions and behaviors of the audience. By understanding how these ads use signs and symbols, we can become more savvy and critical media consumers. By analyzing these ads semiologically, a deep understanding of how meaning is constructed and how they can be used to promote products and services is obtained.

In the history of semiotics, there are several important figures who contributed to the development of his theory. One of these figures is [4] which makes a significant contribution. Roland Barthes's view of semiotics can be seen as a development of the theory of language initiated by Ferdinand de Saussure. Furthermore, Barthes explained that these assumptions can be realized in the form of cultural signs and symbols embedded in the language. He emphasized that the relationship between signs and signs in language is not something natural, but arbitrary or arbitrary. That is, the meaning conceived by a sign is not inherently attached to its form, but rather is shaped by social agreements and conventions. While Saussure's semiotics focused on marking at the denotative level, Roland Barthes expanded its scope by introducing a marking system at the connotative level. Barthes distinguishes these two levels of marking as "*order of signification*" [5]. There are two types of meanings. First, it considers the relationship between signs and reality, called denotation. The second considers the personal and cultural experiences involved in the process of meaning. Barthes also sees myths that mark a society [6]. Barthes referred to myths as messages or communication systems.

Signifier	Signified
Denotative sign	
Connotative signifier	Connotative signified
Connotative sign	

Fig 1. Roland Barthes Meaning Map [7]

From the description of the Barthes sign map, it can be seen that the denotative sign (3) consists of a marker (1) and a sign (2). However, at the same time a denotative sign is also a connotative sign (4). According to [6] denotation in Barthes' view is the first level whose meaning is closed. Denotation is understood as the real meaning, and sometimes it is even confused with references or references [8]. The level of denotation produces explicit, direct and definite meanings [9]. Denotation is the true meaning, which is agreed upon socially, which refers to reality.

## 2 METHOD

This study uses descriptive qualitative research. Qualitative research is the process of collecting data in a scientific context with the aim of defining the events that occur [10]. The author serves as the main tool in this research. Research describes the subject to be discussed in a text or narrative. Qualitative research explores in depth, this makes this type of research attach importance to meaning. In-depth research is used to understand an event or situation and the problems faced that appear in the form of qualitative data in the form of pictures, words, and events as well as in a "natural setting" [11]. The primary data taken in this study is in the form of an electronic document, which is a video taken on a YouTube channel about Apple advertising with the title "Crush! | iPad Pro | Apple". The advertisement was uploaded on May 7, 2024. Secondary data taken is in the form of written documents such as literature study books that contain semiotics, visual semiotics.

In this research, data analysis is needed, the purpose of which is to explain the dissecting tools of a research. Semiotic analysis technique is the technique that will be used for this research. In the Great Dictionary of the Indonesian Language (KBBI) semiotics is a science that studies symbols and signs (in language, traffic, Morse code, etc.). Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis is used to find implicit meanings in communication communicated through signs, both verbal and nonverbal [12].

The data analysis that will be carried out is observation. In order to carry out observation, it is a first step by documenting a 1:08 video of several scenes in the "Crush! | iPad Pro | Apple". Using Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis, the goal is to analyze language and myths. Signs are found in language analysis, while encoded signs are denotations, unencoded signs are connotations, and myths are signs found in myths [13].

### 3 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Crush! | iPad Pro | Apple is an advertisement uploaded by Apple's official channel on Youtube. This advertisement was released on May 7, 2024 and has a duration of 1 minute and 8 seconds with the aim of promoting its latest product, the iPad Pro, which has the advantage of an unusual physical appearance, namely a thin shape. From the data that has been analyzed, the ad with the headline "Crush! | iPad Pro | Apple" until June 27, 2024, the ad has been viewed 3.3 million times and liked morethan 45 thousand times. However, the data obtained related to the advertisement turned out to have many audience assumptions with a negative response.

The results of the analysis that have been carried out first get a strong assumption to conduct in-depth research related to Apple's "Crush! | iPad Pro | Apple" so that it can be identified about the information it wants to convey regarding its ads because there is a fine line between creativity and self-destruction. Apple's new ad, which shows analogues associated with creative activities being destroyed, brings up an iPad product that looks like it can replace everything.

In the process of semiotic analysis on Apple's ad "Crush! | iPad Pro | Apple" researchers paused the video on Apple's official channel on Youtube. The next stage is to take pictures by taking screenshots of several scenes. The following are the results of the analysis carried out with the Roland Barthes semiotics model.

**Table 1.** Semiotic Analysis

Scene	Description
	<p><b>Denotation:</b> A golden trumpet was placed at the top among several other items.</p> <p><b>Connotation:</b> A trumpet will be destroyed by the pressure of the press. The lyrics of the song mean loneliness and under pressure.</p> <p><b>Myth :</b> Musical instruments will no longer be used because they can be replaced with software. Loneliness is caused by down.</p>
	<p><b>Denotation:</b> An analog game device is stacked with other items.</p> <p><b>Connotation:</b> An analog game device is being pressed by a large machine.</p> <p><b>Myth:</b> A destroyed analog game device is usually no longer used or damaged. Whatever the situation, something that has more value will always be prioritized.</p>



**Denotation:** Two computer monitors fell due to push.  
**Connotation:** The computer monitor was displaying video editing activities and then destroyed with a large press. Something that if it does not keep up with the times, it will disappear. The clattering sound of the destruction of an item  
**Myths:** Video editing must be done with an application on your computer



**Denotation:** An analog TV lined with some paint.  
**Connotation:** The variety of TV broadcasts today is more colorful if you watch it not through Analog TV. Summer is one of the right times to do activities, one of which is watching TV.  
**Myths:** Watching a show must be on TV



**Denotation:** The digital camera that is being pressed down causes damage.  
**Connotation:** Damaged digital cameras may need to be destroyed. Summer is one of the right times to do effective activities, one of which is doing photography activities.  
**Myths:** A digital camera can be replaced with a smartphone.



**Denotation:** The pile of books that were pressed until it was damaged.  
**Connotation:** Books in physical form will be replaced by e-books.  
**Myth:** Complete access to learning in modern times is through e-books. In learning related things in this world, a book is needed.



**Denotation:** A press that closes perfectly.  
 Lyrics: Give me a reason to build my world around you.  
**Connotation:** All items have been destroyed and will be replaced with a more sophisticated tool.  
**Myths:** Advanced tools will make human activities easier



**Denotation:** Apple products are iPad Pro.  
**Connotation:** All tools are replaced by one item, the iPad Pro that can do many things.  
**Myths:** iPad Pro can do it all.

## 4 CONCLUSION

The message conveyed through Apple's advertisement, "Crush! | iPad Pro | Apple" has a meaning. The right audio and visual effects make the ads made by Apple look

very attractive. However, with so many different interpretations from each individual, Apple's "Crush! | iPad Pro | Apple" makes pros and cons. The ad can be assumed to be off target because the main point captured by the audience is to kill human creativity as if everything can be replaced by a smartphone.

But Apple users don't need to think badly because of the ads, Apple pays attention to its users to continue to innovate in creativity in their field because after all, an advanced technology will not be able to be grafted 100% from the original product.

## References

1. A. A. Piliang, *Telaah Pemaknaan Tanda dan Makna*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar., 2012.
2. D. R. Kusuma and R. Nurhayati, *Semiotika: Teori dan Aplikasi*. Jakarta: PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama., 2017.
3. R. Wirianto, *Semiotika Kuantum: Sebuah Pengantar Kajian Tanda dan Makna dalam Budaya Populer*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2016.
4. R. Barthes, *Elements of Semiology*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1967.
5. St. M. Nujhan and M. Rifai, *Semiotika: Teori dan Aplikasi*. Jakarta: PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2019.
6. E. Wahyuningsih, *Semiotika Budaya: Memahami Tanda dan Makna dalam Kehidupan Sehari-hari*. Bandung: PT Refika Aditama, 2018.
7. A. Sobur, *Semiotika Komunikasi*. Jakarta: Universitas Indonesia Press., 2013.
8. F. Widiastuti, *Semiotika Terapan: Kajian Tanda dan Makna dalam Berbagai Konteks*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2020.
9. M. R. Rorong and W. A. Suci, *Semiotika: Kajian Tanda dan Makna dalam Kebudayaan*. Yogyakarta: Sanjaya Pustaka, 2019.
10. A. Anggito and J. Setiawan, *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*. Sukabumi: CV Jejak, 2018.
11. M. Jibril, *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2018.
12. M. Fadillah, *Semiotika Barthes: Sebuah Pengantar Kajian Tanda dan Makna*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2020.
13. A. Nasisti, "Analisis Semiotika Roland Barthes pada Mitos Nazi," *Jurnal Semiotika*, vol. 10, no. 2, 2022.

**Open Access** This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits any noncommercial use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons license, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons license and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

