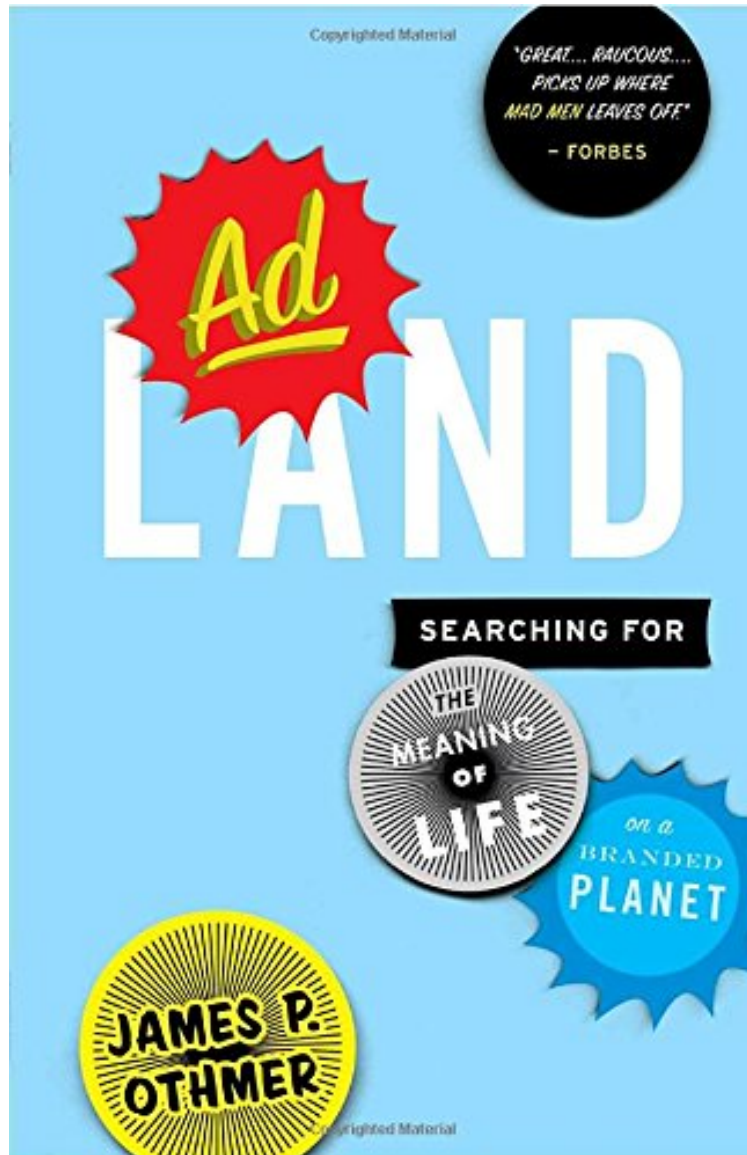


Adland: Searching for the Meaning of Life on a Branded Planet

James P. Othmer

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James P. Othmer : Adland: Searching for the Meaning of Life on a Branded Planet before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Adland: Searching for the Meaning of Life on a Branded Planet:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Compelling book that looks both backward and forward at advertisingBy The Marketing Guy Who Drives Sales -rJames Othmer takes the reader through the advertising industry

as it was 20 years ago until the dawn of the digital age through his own eyes and experiences as an industry insider. He is a talented writer and this book will be difficult to put down if you are a marketing, branding or advertising wonk. Heck, even if you simply enjoy watching the ads during the Super Bowl you'll enjoy this book. Othmer takes you back in time when the large, traditional ad agencies were at their peak creating consumer perceptions and delivering sales for clients. He takes you back to a fascinating and sometimes absurd world of excess, manipulation, craziness, greed, hard work and irrational exuberance dotted with flashes of brilliance and unmatched creativity. 30-second TV ads ruled the land and advertising execs fell prey to the human tendency to believe that the good times were here to stay and that the money would just keep rolling in from clients forever. He tells first-hand stories of his experiences and his cynicism belies the fact that he is actually on the path to redemption by deconstructing the digital revolution, honestly assessing the stumbling of traditional ad agencies and seeking ethical recovery in present and future advertising and brand building practices. The last few chapters have you staring into the light of the future by looking at how savvy marketers are now engaging with consumers in ways never before imagined using media and strategies that none of us envisioned just a few years ago. He gets to the heart when he recounts a statement made by Rick Boyko, former chief creative officer of Ogilvy Mather and now professor at VCU's Brandcenter when Boyko states, "Now more than ever the brand steward isn't the corporation or the agency, it's the consumer." This is a truism that I have stated many times (just see my reviewers profile 'In My Own Words' section) and it is a truism that branders must accept and embrace and then meet consumers where they are engaging with brands--in online forums, on Facebook, online reviews, YouTube, blogs and LCD screens both large and small everywhere. This shift in brand stewardship is the pivot point upon which this book built and you'll enjoy taking a stroll with Othmer during the shift. I believe this book coupled with 'Obsessive Branding Disorder' by Lucas Conley ought to be required reading for anyone involved in marketing. I am happy to highly recommend "AdLand: The Meaning of Life on a Branded Planet." I couldn't put it down. ~Review by the author of the e-book, "How to Build and Manage Your Brand (in sickness and in health)." 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Superb Book!! By Cholula This is one of the best books I have ever read and I read over a hundred books annually spanning a wide variety of topics. The author is exceptionally talented, extremely funny, and a joy to read. Every page was a delight. I found myself laughing out loud and some sections such as the F212 section nearly brought tears to my eyes from the vivid description of this fascinating organization. I spent 30+ years on the client side of a Fortune 25 company mostly as a Marketing Director responsible, among many other duties, for advertising. I never had the privilege of meeting or working with the author but I wish I had as he would have undoubtedly had a positive impact on my brands. PLEASE consider buying and enjoying this fascinating book. You certainly won't be disappointed. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Absolutely brilliant. By Jason Miller 20 year plus advertising veteran James Othmer is not only a brilliant adman, but he's also one hell of a great storyteller. I love this book because it reads like an episode of Behind the Music episode, but instead of the rise and fall of your favorite artist, it's the rise and fall and rise again of the advertising biz.

James P. Othmer, advertising executive turned novelist, gives us a hilarious, personal, and sneakily profound chronicle of the past, present, and future of the advertising business. On one level it's the wickedly funny, compelling personal chronicle of the rise and fall of a modern-day ad man; a riveting insider's look at the astonishing transformation taking place in advertising's hottest idea factories. But take a step back from the tales of lavish shoots, agencies on the brink, and pampered mega-brands and Adland becomes much more: a snapshot of how we are living our lives thirty seconds at a time. Funny, deeply thoughtful, and utterly unique, this book is both a wildly amusing ride in Adland, brilliantly recounted, and an exploration of the value of life in the information age.

From Publishers Weekly The life of an advertising executive couldn't be further from the glamorous world of Mad Men, according to this entertaining, albeit meandering, memoir. After a giddy beginning banging out copy for a small ad agency, Othmer, a longtime creative director and copywriter, worked his way to the top in 2000 only to discover that his traditional agency was being abandoned in favor of forward-thinking brand stewards who wanted hip new ideas from smaller shops well-versed in new media and digital marketing. Fascinated by groundbreaking interactive campaigns like the 2007 Nine Inch Nails Internet Easter egg hunt and Burger King's Subservient Chicken gag, he found his love for advertising reinvigorated, and his book is an effort to better understand the inescapable industry's influence on culture. Though there's no particular conclusion drawn, and the story itself wanders, the humor and genuine excitement that shine through may keep some media-world readers interested—most tellingly when, at a swanky party full of advertising executives, the author wistfully observes that even real life has begun to feel fake. (Sept.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "Great. . . . Raucous. . . . Picks up where Mad Men leaves off." —Forbes "Entertaining and thought-provoking. . . . [Othmer's] sharp voice helps cut through the hype, and underscores how the distinction between entertainment and advertising is vanishing more quickly than anyone imagines." —"Smart Money," WSJ.com "[A] hilarious chronicle of the absurd world of Madison Avenue." —The Free Lance Star "An engrossing tour of a revolution that is unlikely to be televised. . . . Othmer wields his pen like a stiletto." —CNN/Money.com "An enjoyable and profound read. . . . It resonates with

everything we love about this industry, everything we hate, everything that keeps us working in it, everything that makes us want to leave and everything that makes us believe in what could still be possible. . . . Buy it now.”

—Advertising Age “Othmer’s story has dual appeal—as a portrait of a changing industry and a template for readers torn between a drive for professional success and a pull toward human happiness. . . . A great resource for anyone whose professional life makes them want to sing the from theme song from Alfie.” —The Huffington Post “One of the pop culture must-reads of the year.” —LargeHeartedBoy.com “A memoir about selling and selling out in a world Don Draper and his Mad Men colleagues never could have envisioned. . . . As juicy a read as the chicken KFC hired (Othmer) to promote.” —Louisville Courier Journal “Truth in advertising comes through in this revealing tome.” —MediaBistro.com “Othmer is a witty and charming tour guide who chats self-deprecatingly about his own Adland epiphanies and humiliations while leading us inexorably toward the birthing room of Advertising Next. A terrific introduction to what advertising has been and what it is becoming, a memoir-manifesto with warmth and insight, and a must-read for those contemplating entering the industry.” —Max Barry, author of *Company* and *Jennifer Government* “Advertising is an industry like any other, except it changes our planet daily. James Othmer, one of my favorite writers, takes you inside that world and makes the people and places real. You can dislike these guys, but you can’t ignore them. They make sure of that.” —Seth Godin, author of *Tribes* “With a unique blend of humor and insight, Othmer guides us through this rapidly changing business and lets us see the direction in which it is headed. A must read for any student of advertising.” —Rick Boyko, Director, VCU Brandcenter “For nearly half a century, David Ogilvy’s *Confessions of an Advertising Man* has served as the Old Testament for an industry. Now there’s a new one: James Othmer’s *Adland*. Fully aware of (but not made giddy by) the many changes that have brought advertising from the classical Age of Ogilvy to our current era of the digital baroque, Othmer describes the art of commerce with the insight of an insider and the bemusement of a novelist.” —Robert Thompson, Professor of Popular Culture, Syracuse University “What Upton Sinclair did for meatpacking, Jim Othmer has done for advertising—only with far more humor and far less (physical) horror. *Adland* is destined to become a classic of its kind—a must read for anyone brave (or insane or aimless) enough to toil in the fields of modern advertising.” —Daniel H. Pink, author of *A Whole New Mind* “James P. Othmer is one of the funniest writers at work today. Period. His keen eye for the absurdities of the modern world rivals the likes of George Saunders and Sam Lipsyte. You could sharpen knives on Othmer’s sentences. Prior to his 2006 debut novel, *The Futurist*, he was honing his mad skills in the advertising racket, as an exec at Young Rubicam. And though I daresay it was a colossal waste of his talents, I, for one, am glad he endured it, or we wouldn’t have *Adland*, a hilarious and insightful chronicle of the rise and fall of a modern ad man.” —Jonathan Evison, author of *All About Lulu and West of Here* “I’ve been in advertising more than twenty years and spent countless hours trying to tell people how insane and hilarious and exciting and pointless and fascinating it all is. Now all I have to do is hand them this book.” —Jamie Barrett, Creative Director/Partner Goodby Silverstein Partners, SFAbout the Author James P. Othmer is a former creative director at advertising giant Young Rubicam, and the author of the novels *Holy Water* and *The Futurist*. www.jamesothmer.com