Nike’s All Conditions Gear Blazerboat Advertisement

The Nike advertisement “Strut like a Fish” attempts to persuade consumers to buy the Nike All Conditions Gear Blazerboat, a shoe that promises to meet the needs of a nature explorer. According to the ad, the shoe is necessary gear for the outdoorsman whose quest for adventure will naturally take him to a variety of rugged terrains, including streams, creeks, and rivers. **This ad effectively uses appeals to ethos, pathos, and logos to sell a product Nike claims has “evolved” into something superior implying perhaps “survival of the fittest.”**

**Ethos is established** primarily through name-brand recognition and a claim that the ACG Blazerboat will meet the needs of individuals whose playground is the rough terrain of the hardy outdoors. “ACG” stands for “All Conditions Gear,” Nike products presumably developed for multiple types of weather and terrain. The targeted audience of this ad expects a challenge from extreme adventure and demands high-quality equipment to meet the needs of intense outdoor activity. The green, mossy, almost camouflaged color of “strut” suggests earthiness and back-to-nature ruggedness that would appeal to the strong individual undaunted by the demands of “scrambling up a slope of scree,” ever striving for the “mountain-top view.” In addition to the visual appeal, the Nike ad claims that this shoe has “evolved” over a period of twenty years, suggesting a long commitment to create a superior product, therefore establishing trust in their brand. Nike is a well-established company with a good reputation, so the symbolic Nike swoosh is an icon that builds on that trust. Finally, the ad is signed “amphibiously yours,” a playful closing that suggests a friendly tone, implying that Nike is a friend to adventurers, understanding their need for strong and reliable footgear in the rough elements of the outdoors.

The ad clearly **appeals to the outdoorsman’s sense of adventure and love for nature** through color and play on words. In essence “strut like a fish” is a mixed metaphor, the word “strut” written in large earthly green letters that dominate the ad. The ad suggests that the wearer of this shoe will be able to commune with nature, even “walk hand in fin,” moving like a trout while maintaining a position of superiority to the trout. The comment, “Don’t pity the trout,” plays on the pride of potential customers, people who see themselves easily conquering any adverse conditions they may encounter. The ad, therefore, claims that wearing the shoe in water is not only possible but encouraged since the shoes “have gills that breathe water in and drain it right back out again.” With the suggestion that the shoes will enable the wearer to enjoy a friendly bout with nature, the ad creates a carefree tone, appealing to the outdoorsman’s love of nature. The position of the shoe, as though taking a step, invites the adventurer to slip his foot in and walk out into the welcoming outdoors. In addition, the imperative to “get in there with it,” adds to the consumer’s sense of urgency to buy the product and interact with the fish. These appeals to pathos are compelling to the consumer who wants to be a part of an outdoor adventure with the right shoe to enjoy it.

Though not a prominent appeal, the ad does make a **logical claim**. In this ad Nike argues for a well-designed shoe that can take in the raw elements of nature and remain strong and resilient: the hiker can “strut” while experiencing “the pleasure of jumping . . . and scrambling” energetically through the rugged outdoors. The ad also notes the holes which are gill-like, enabling the water to exit the shoe efficiently so the shoe can dry quickly; this suggestion of sturdiness and practicality that allows hikers to continue unhindered by the adverse conditions is likely to appeal to those buyers. Offering this important fact is a key selling feature of the ad.

This advertisement is effective in making three key appeals to **ethos, pathos, and logos**. The athletic shoe ad especially attracts to the hardy person of the outdoors who can, with the help of Nike, navigate any terrain the wilderness offers because they’re “wearing the Nike ACG Blazerboat.”