



### Mid-Century Ads: Advertising from the Mad Men Era

Taschen, hardcover, 2 vols. in slipcase, 720 pages, more than 700 illustrations in color and black and white, \$59.99.

Another winner from Taschen, this two-volume set chronicles America's love affair with consumerism, which blossomed in the decades following World War II. Stylish and evocative magazine advertising, dubbed "colorful capitalism," was then the gold standard for modern marketing. At agencies much like *Mad Men's* fictional Sterling Cooper, ad men — and the occasional woman — relied on human feedback (not computers), wit and intuition to fashion their pitches to the public. *Mid-Century Ads* is replete with snappy slogans — "Does she...or doesn't she?" — and crisp, forward-looking images of everything from cars to toothpaste, air travel to home appliances, vividly showcasing the plethora of goods and services that American consumers yearned for. (Among the vibrant images in volume one, covering the 1950s, are pink typewriters, lime-green bathroom fixtures and an orange Pontiac convertible.) In the 1960s, the industry's efforts became focused on "The Big Idea": building name recognition through "relentless bombardment of amusing slogans and images." Advertising turned more flamboyant — eventually psychedelic — and suggestive, reflecting the freewheeling sexual mores of the decade. With their seductive imagery and chipper attitude, these ads made consumers feel that the objects of their desires were just within reach. ■