



The image I chose to blog about is the classic Maxell advertisement. This advertisement, known as “The Blown Away” guy achieved cultural icon status when it was launched as a two page ad in Rolling Stone in 1980. There were also television spots that had “The Flight of the Valkyries” by Wilhelm Wagner as the soundtrack. This image can be compared to the likes of “The Marlboro Man” as far as brand recognition.

The reason I chose this image is that it evokes so many things all by this one picture. On the surface, there is the depiction of a very suave cool person listening to music while drinking a martini. He is being blown away by the audio quality coming through the speakers from the Maxell tape reproduction. Reading into it, here is a true audiophile, allowing the amazing music on the tape to sweep him away – almost literally. The image speaks to people who love music and love to play it loud. You can identify with the person in the picture and that is a huge part of fostering brand loyalty. I wanted to be this person. I wanted Maxell tape, which was more expensive than off brand tape, because I felt it was better quality. I remember buying Maxell tapes based off this commercial. I stayed with Maxell tapes because they were good but I bought them originally based on this commercial and others like it from this brand.

The other thing that struck me about the picture was its starkness. Notice the room is bare other than the chair; the speaker; the drink; the table; the human; and the lamp. If there was more clutter, it would take away from the perceived notion of the person being blown away. In my mind’s eye, I can see the waves of sound rushing over this gentleman even though it is not visual in the photo. This is a classic piece of advertisement and a wonderful memory from my childhood in the 80’s.