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Hard-sell Commercials vs. Identity Commercials

By Kahlia Hannah

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There is a man who owns a locally based chain of used computer stores in the city where I live. It is my personal opinion that he should be presented with an award for producing the most annoying television commercials in history. That award probably wouldn't mean much to him, as he is now a rich man who couldn't care less if his commercials are ridiculous. After all, those commercials made him the rich man he is today.

This man I speak of was a pioneer in the world of hard-sell commercials. His commercials were tacky, irritating, obvious and brass. They were also fact-based, convincing, high-energy and memorable.

Your hard-sell commercial does not need to encompass the entire range of adjectives I used to describe those particular hard-sell commercials.

The hard-sell commercial has a few common identifying traits that have nothing to do with being annoying.

- * They often include prices.
- * They show as much merchandise as possible.
- * They often tell of a promotional offer or sale.
- * The company or product name is usually on the screen through the entire commercial.

These four traits are common for one reason; they increase sales. This is why:

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- * The advertiser should include the price if it is exceptionally low. Low priced items get customers off the couch and into the store.
- * Show potential customers some merchandise and they will often see something they want. You will also give people a sense of how much selection you offer.
- * Using promotional advertising creates a sense of urgency. People will have to buy your product within the allotted amount of time.
- * If you keep your name on the screen during the entire commercial, people will see the name even if they mute their television during the commercials. They also become familiar with the font, logo and color scheme you use, and will recognize

it when they see it again.

Now, you may be wondering, if hard-sell commercials work so well, why don't all the Coca Colas and McDonalds and Volkswagens use them? Because they are more concerned with selling an image. When companies try to sell an image instead of an identity, their marketing is not fact based. They often sell the intangible benefits: you will be cool, you will be sophisticated, and your entire well-being will be improved by using our product. Creating an image can sometimes become a game of who looks better, instead of who is better.

We all like to dream, but most of us are grounded in reality. We may occasionally be taken in by the model with flowing, auburn hair who only spent five dollars on a box of store dye to achieve it, or the car full of partying teenagers who love their car so much they would rather remain in it than attend a party, but we will never believe it.

The reason hard-sell commercials work so well is that they promote the tangible, rational benefits of a product. It is difficult to promote the practical value of perfume or beer.

So when you decide to market using television commercials, remember who your audience is: people who have jobs and kids and responsibilities. In other words, real people who live in the real world.

Kahlia Hannah provides marketing advice and popular promotion packages. See her low-cost direct marketing and PR deals at <http://MarketingHelp.NET> Reach Kahlia at <mailto:kahlia@drnunley.com> or 801-328-9006.

How Much Advertising Can a Buck Buy?

By Shannan Hearne-Fortner

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You know those annoying commercials for dial around long distance services? A dollar? What can you do for a dollar? Well, I've decided they aren't quite as dumb as the characters portrayed in said commercials.

A dollar could be one of the most viral marketing tools in your marketing arsenal. Not free advertising, but reasonably priced indeed.

Thanks to a new website, <http://www.wheresgeorge.com/> you can place your URL upon every dollar bill that passes through your wallet or pocketbook and then track where it goes.

First of all, it is the only advertising money you will ever get to spend twice. Spend it once when you advertise upon George's face and then spend the dollar again to put your advertising message into circulation. To really get double the bang for your buck you could write your URL on the bills and then spend them on additional advertising.

Secondly, imagine your excitement when you receive an order form Des Moines, Iowa and then check <http://www.wheresgeorge.com> and see that one of your 100 penny advertising investments is currently floating around Des Moines as well. Talk about a better bang for your buck. Just think, if your Des Moines, Iowa order nets you ten measley dollars that is a 1000% return on your investment.

And don't forget, you already got to spend George just to set the marketing workhorse into motion. Not a bad investment indeed.

Can you throw all your other marketing efforts out the window? Of course not, but the next time you see those silly dial around commercials, you can smile and know that you can get a lot more out of a buck than a little twenty minute phone call.

Shannan Hearne-Fortner is the President and Wizard of <http://www.SuccessPromotions.com> Marketing Your e-Business Better through creative marketing and knowledge. Guerrilla Marketing. One-to-One Marketing. Relationship Marketing. YourMarketing.



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