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The Bold and The Beautiful

By Karen E. Hipp

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Many of you may never used billboards in your marketing efforts, but there is much that can be learned in terms of marketing by studying them.

I happen to live in Orlando, Florida, probably one of the largest "billboard capitals" of the nation. Our major Interstate, I-4, is littered with them. There are so many you can't help but look at them. And they're expensive. Plan on about \$6,000 a month for one billboard on I-4, and that's without lights or any special production elements.

The big guys here, Disney World, Universal Studios and Sea World has most of the billboards on I-4. Well, they are the ones with the money. And they are quite elaborate.

Three-dimensional, specialty lights, moving pieces, top-outs. The first time they put the ET (you know "phone home") billboard up on I-4, I almost drove off the road, it looked so real.

Unfortunately, not all creative teams who come up with designs for billboards have the same knowledge or skill level that the folks at Universal have. Too bad, because if you have a poor billboard design, you might have well stuffed your money into that perennial black hole (this goes for poorly designed newspaper and magazine ads too).

I hate to pick on one company's billboards, but they are so bad, it makes them an easy target. We'll call this company's billboards Easy Target Mall (the billboards happen to be promoting a mall). Because there was a new mall opening in our town, right on I-4, the Easy Target Mall wanted to put lots of billboards on Interstate-4. So they proceeded to buy several billboards right at the ramp entrances and exits to the new mall. OK. Not a bad strategy so far. While the new mall was under construction, Easy Target Mall already had their billboards up. (Just to say, "Hey don't look at them, look at me!").

The first problem arose with the first billboard series for Easy Target Mall. One had a very colorful background with a wrapped present on it. The copy read "It's somebody's birthday somewhere." My first reaction was "So? How does this pertain to me?" I thought about it as I continued down the road (that's a bad sign if someone has to try to figure out your advertising message). Half way home it hit

The Bold and The Beautiful

me "Oh," I said. "They are trying to imply that because someone is having a birthday somewhere, you might also happen to know someone having a birthday and that means you should go to Easy Target Mall to buy a gift. Right?"

Hands on buzzers. True or False. Do you think it's a good idea that the consumer has to try to figure out what your ad means? Reading a billboard while going 55 miles an hour? If you even see it your lucky. How many of you think that consumers would even bother to try to figure out what it meant?? Oh, maybe one in 10,000? I started laughing and wished I had a piece of the action in selling that billboard space to Easy Target Mall.

This is what happens when creative types have no common sense. And believe me, there are a lot of them out there. But aren't the people from Easy Target Mall supposed to be intelligent enough to say

"No, ad agency, this won't work. Go back and come up with something else." But, it got approved at the mall level, then the company's regional level and most frightening at the corporate headquarters that own Easy Target Mall. Wouldn't ya think someone would say, "Hey, the emperor has no clothes." I swear that ad agencies must cast some kind of spell on their clients to get some of their work approved!

But yet, it gets worse.

Now the new mall is getting ready to open in a week. So Easy Target Mall, who obviously has been planning this new strategy for months, changes all of their billboards that are near the new mall to a new series of "Hey, can you figure this out" billboards.

Because Easy Target Mall has more department stores than the new mall, they decide that will be their new angle. "We're bigger, so we must be better." So what do their new billboards say? "You Need Big." Followed with visuals of big blown up pictures of various merchandise like sunglasses and a purse. This might work if the mall was trying to attract local residents. They could follow it up with TV and magazines and newspaper ads so that people would eventually get it. Which is what Easy Target Mall has been doing.

BUT, they are trying to mostly attract tourists! Who will maybe only see the billboard once, if they are lucky. So the tourist says as they drive down I-4, "You Need Big." And all of these billboards are right outside this new BIG mall that they are looking at as they read the billboard. All the tourist is getting in his mind is "Big Mall." Like the one we're staring right at. Yeah, let's shop there!

One of the big blown up pictures on the billboard looks like cigarettes criss-crossed on top of a red background (at least that's the way it looks at 60 miles an hour). I thought "No way, they CAN'T be promoting buying large cigarettes at Easy Target Mall. It took me several times of really trying to stare at the billboard (and not get in a wreck at the same time) to finally figure out what it was. It was a blown up picture of white shoelaces on a red tennis shoe. All you see are the white shoelaces. Trust me, it doesn't look like big white shoelaces.

And here's the REAL fun part. The creative types for Easy Target Mall have made the logo for Easy

The Bold and The Beautiful

Target Mall so SMALL (not big) that you can't READ what mall it is! So you just assume it's the mall you're currently staring at, the new mall.

If I were the new mall, I would send a great big thank you letter and fruit basket to Easy Target Mall for advertising their new mall, for FREE!

What does all of this mean? You can get a great, free education by just studying the variety of TV, newspaper and magazine ads out there to learn what you shouldn't do with your advertising! It's everywhere. And, feel grateful that you aren't spending \$6,000 a month for a billboard on I-4.

Easy Target Mall should have used this for their copy:

We have more stores than they do.
Easy Target Mall

Just 3 miles down the road

You Are Beautiful

By Hifzur Rehman

Yes, it is true, you are beautiful beyond any doubt.

Do you know that you are a unique person with a special kind of God gifted beauty which no other person possess. That beauty is something very personal and individual. You must acknowledge that "hidden" beauty within you to know your own worth as a beautiful person.

Beauty is something which can neither be measured by any scale nor can be described in words. It's an impression which one leaves on others and that impression is the true reflection of many fine characteristics of one's own personality. I call it "inner beauty". You may like to visit my website:

and read my article "TAKE CARE OF YOUR INNER BEAUTY" to learn

more about beauty. I have devoted a full Section of my site to "Beauty and Wellness" articles.

If in doubt about your beauty, you may be suffering from some kind of inferiority complex thus badly affecting your professional and family life. Don't let the negative forces to ruin your life. Be confident about yourself.

Look straight in the mirror and say with full confidence "I am beautiful". Wait and let the mirror say "you are beautiful". On your way to job, shopping or social engagements, keep repeating "I am beautiful" and let others say "you are beautiful". Your eyes, ears, nose, lips and even the pores of your skin must say "I am beautiful". This type of confidence about your own beauty will leave no option to others but to admit that you are beautiful.

The Bold and The Beautiful

Why now start a new life as a self–confident beautiful person and achieve success in every sphere of your life. You are no doubt a beautiful person. Say YES!

Hifzur Rehman is an author and editor of his website

. This website is a

great source of FREE motivational, educational and informative material on various aspects of life. A visit to this website will be a pleasant experience and open the doors of success for you.

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You Are Beautiful

Wedding Gown Guide: Why Wedding Gowns Are Important

Still Life Photography In A Home Studio

A Luxury Island In Your Living Room

Jewelry - Blinging In Style

How Nice Guys, Shy Guys and Good Guys Finish First!

Home Remodeling Secrets

How to play a Guitar

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The Ultimate Rose Garden– Neighbors envy, owners pride!



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