



By Richard D. Czerniawski

BREAKTHROUGH ADVERTISING

Make it so powerful, so unusual, or so dynamically dominating that it captures the eye despite the competition of other advertisements less unique or less positive in their impact.

Victor Schwab, HOW TO WRITE A GOOD ADVERTISEMENT

When I think of the word "breakthrough," I imagine a leap forward. Unfortunately, in the domain of advertising, there aren't many breakthroughs. The advances that make me go, "WOW!"

When it comes to brand advertising (or "communications" or "messaging," if you prefer), a breakthrough would be a campaign (or ad) that *cuts through the clutter to resonate with the target customer in such a way that it motivates preference and the achievement of the brand's behavior objective*. In other words, the message is received, realized, and prompts the desired action (that's the behavior objective—switching, trade-up, etc.).

I didn't think that I'd associate this notion of breakthrough advertising with a pharmaceutical ad. Instead, I think of consumer brands. When I think breakthrough, the MasterCard "Priceless" campaign comes to mind. I also think Allstate "Mayhem," Geico "Caveman," Coke "Mean Joe Green" (Have a Coke and a Smile) and "Mountain Top" (I'd like to teach the world to sing ...). Not pharmaceutical advertising.

But then, DTC (Direct to Consumer) ads have come a long way. Pharma brands are among the top advertisers. If you watch TV, you have undoubtedly seen ads for pharmaceutical brands such as Ozempic, Eliquis, Keytruda, Xeljanz, and Rybelsus. You've also seen your fair share of ads from Humira and Enbrel. These ads may have intruded on your enjoyment of the programming as opposed to connected with you.

Recently I came across a breakthrough not just in pharmaceutical advertising but all advertising. It reached out and grabbed my attention from the first line, "Welcome to my vagina." What? Say again! It's advertising for phexxi, non-hormonal, on-demand birth control medication that puts women in charge of their, well, care.

The advertising is bold, sassy, authentic, refreshing, and liberating—for young, contemporary, independent women. It features the actress Annie Murphy, one of the stars of the popular comedy Schitt's Creek. She makes the rules in how she lives and her birth control choices. Her message is clear: hormones (i.e., hormonal birth control treatments) don't work for her. And, she only need use

it in the moment—when she is “planning on having company.”

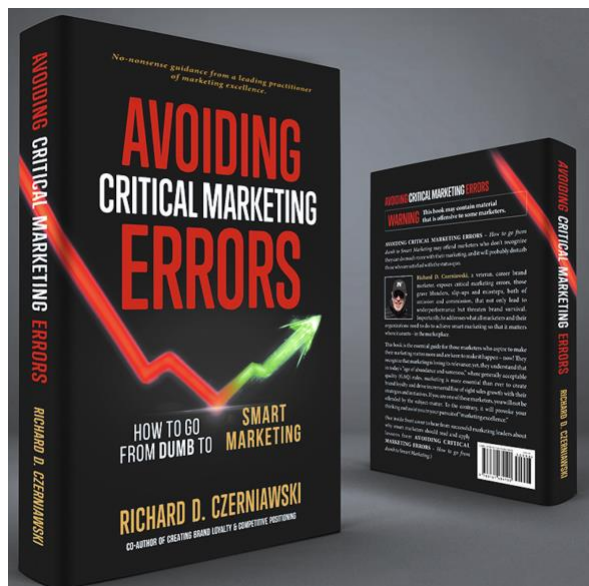
The behavior objective is clear, too. It’s about switching from using or considering a hormonal birth control product to phexxi. I expect it will successfully motivate switching among women who experience adverse side effects from hormonal treatments and those who would rather not use systemic drugs or intrauterine (IUD) devices.

By the way, while I believe the “ph” in the name reinforces that its MOA (mode-of-action) is about regulating the ph-level in the vagina, I feel the brand name phexxi comes across as “sexy.” Perhaps, that’s how it might make some women feel when they’re planning on having company. Then what do I know? After all, I’m just a (brand ad) guy.

Judge the ad for yourself. You’ll find the commercial here: <https://www.phexxi.com/annie-murphy>

“NINETY-NINE PERCENT OF ADVERTISING DOESN’T SELL MUCH OF ANYTHING.” David Ogilvy

Is your advertising among the ninety-nine percent? Read Chapter 9, Brand Communications that Suck, in **AVOIDING CRITICAL MARKETING ERRORS: How to Go from Dumb to Smart Marketing.** It will identify those critical errors and, importantly, point the way to developing advertising in the Top 1%. Learn more here: <http://bdn-intl.com/avoiding-critical-marketing-errors>



Peace and best wishes,

Richard Czerniawski



Richard D. Czerniawski

1812 Yates Avenue

Pensacola, Florida 32503

847-312-8822

richardcz@bdn-intl.com

richardcz@me.com

www.bdn-intl.com