

DISPATCHESTM

Insights On Brand Development From The Marketing Front

SUPER BOWL LVII - USING CELEBRITIES IN ADVERTISING TO GRAB ATTENTION

What do Miles Teller, John Travolta, Jennifer Lopez, Ben Affleck, Melissa McCarthy, Steve Martin, Serena Williams, Will Ferrell, Anna Faris, Martha Stewart, Snoop Dogg, and Nick Jonas have in common?

They all starred in commercials aired during Super Bowl LVII. They were just a few that spring to mind from the many chosen to pitch brands during the annual extravaganza. Over 50 celebrities appeared in ads. Some ads showcased multiple pop stars.

Why? There are a few reasons for the widespread use of celebrities in advertising. The first is to provide entertainment value in the single-most prestigious venue for “advertainment.” Clients and their ad agencies forget that the purpose of advertising is to build the business. In other words, it is about profitably generating sales and increasing market share.

Another reason for celebrities' widespread use is to capture viewers' attention and engage them in the message. Celebrities can help cut through the clutter of the more than 50 commercials for products appearing during the game. However, they don't always lead to engagement in the brand's strategic message.

The third reason is to connect with consumers who are fans of the celebrity appearing in the commercial. Stars have franchises, and advertisers seek to capitalize on those connections. Celebrities can provide a positive halo for the brands, which helps, in turn, to win their fans to them.

So, there are some excellent reasons for using celebrities. However, there's more to the story. I'm not going to talk about the pitfalls of using celebrities, as I detailed these in a past article. If you're interested in learning more, click here: <http://bdn-intl.com/my-last-word-on-super-bowl-lv-advertising>

This DISPATCHES article is about the need to go beyond grabbing attention and using celebrities wisely.

Over 50 years ago, I learned about AIDA during my MBA studies. No, not AIDA the opera but the acronym to guide advertising development and bolster effectiveness. Garnering “attention,” while the first “A” in the acronym is followed in turn by:

- “I” for “interest,”
- “D” for “desire,” and the final
- “A” for “action.”

The use of a celebrity needs to bring something to the party beyond attention-grabbing entertainment. S/he must create engagement with the brand’s story. Additionally, the story s/he shares needs to establish the brand’s point clearly—its strategic promise—to create interest. Celebrity usage in advertising must reveal the brand’s promise in a compelling way that transcends need and stimulates a desire for it. Finally, if all works well, it will motivate the behavior the advertiser intends—switching, increased frequency of usage, adoption, trade-up, etc.—to build sales.

Here are some thoughts when considering and using celebrities in your advertising:

1. Remember, the objective is not to provide advertainment but to profitably build your brand sales and market share. Choose celebrities that will boost brand sales—not just garner attention.
2. Consider whether a specific celebrity will add sufficient value to warrant their extraordinary compensation on top of the airtime and commercial production. I don’t know what payment Will Ferrell, Ben Affleck, or any of those stars commanded for their involvement. \$1 million? \$3 million? \$5 million? Is the actual cost of creating and delivering the advertising \$10 million? \$15 million? Will the celebrity help create a positive ROI (return on investment)?
3. Use celebrities that are relevant to the brand and its story. Think Michael Jordan and Gatorade. Think Air Jordans for Nike. Michael Jordan was no mere pitchman. Advertising that featured him inspired fans and budding athletes of all ages to “be like Mike.” Even I wanted to be like Mike!
4. Create advertising that’s about the brand, not the celebrity. Our goal is not to build value for the celebrity but for the brand. It’s not about feeding their ego but connecting the brand with target customers to drive incremental sales. The celebrity is the vehicle for the brand’s message. BTW, if target customers can’t remember what brand the celebrity represents, the advertising goes over their heads.
5. Consider the celebrity's personality and its match with the Brand Character for your brand or what you want to establish for your brand. Mathew McConaughey is smooth, stylish, and suave. Lincoln Motors’ advertising that featured Mr. McConaughey served to extend his magnetic personality and presence to the auto brand and build sales.
6. Avoid those celebrities for whom potential bad behavior can hurt your brand. Do your homework and learn everything you can about your celebrity choice. Check out the rumors. Don’t ignore what everyone else seems to know. Many of you are probably not familiar with the Ivory Snow Detergent Brand story and Marilyn Chambers. The brand featured Ms. Chambers as a young mother holding her

precious baby on its packaging. Ivory Snow touted its purity. However, it was discovered that Marilyn Chambers was a leading porn star. Don't let it happen to your brand.

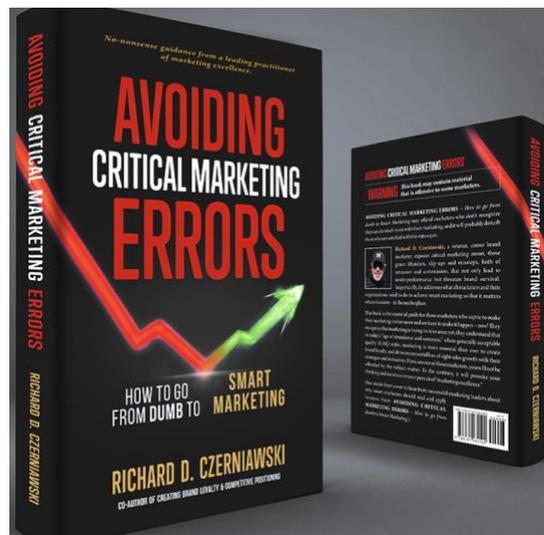
7. Consider creating your celebrity and own it. Progressive insurance created Flo. Geico created the Gecko. AllState Insurance presented us with Mayhem. Leo Burnett Advertising created animated celebrities such as Tony the Tiger, the Pillsbury Doughboy, and the Jolly Green Giant. The animated celebrities are integral to the brand story and won't expose themselves to children, create scandals, or turn against your brand. Ho! Ho! Ho!
8. If you have a celebrity that works for your brand don't make it a one off. Think campaign, not a spot. We define campaign as "more than one in a row that works across a wide range of mediums."

Your advertising needs more than customer attention. Don't make the advertising about the celebrity and advertainment. Don't stop at grabbing attention for your brand.

Sing AIDA at the top of your lungs. ATTENTION, INTEREST, DESIRE, and ACTION! If you're not getting it, drop the celebrities. Whether your brand features celebrities or not, if your advertising isn't singing AIDA, create new advertising that does!

“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 that achieves AIDA. Learn more here: <http://bdn-intl.com/avoiding-critical-marketing-errors>



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Also, consider following me on LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/in/richarddczerniawski/> where I share my perspectives from 50 years of successful worldwide brand marketing experience in my blog THINK ABOUT IT each week.

Peace and best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Czerniawski". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'R' and a stylized 'C'.

Richard D. Czerniawski

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