

Ad Track: Kraft, FTD, Western Union adjust ads for recession

By Theresa Howard, USA TODAY

Marketers are making over many classic, even century-old American brands to address a change in consumers who are focusing more on basic values during the downturn.

Long-standing brands such as Kraft's Miracle Whip, FTD and Western Union are creating marketing for a new consumer mind-set to try to boost sales. As people continue to curb spending and their enthusiasm for overextending themselves, marketers are trying to re-create brands to be more relevant.

But marketing consultant Robert Passikoff warns that getting consumers to buy into a new look and buy the product takes time and money.

"Most of the time, marketers think they can come up with a zipper, modern logo and more modern music," says Passikoff, president of marketing consulting firm Brand Keys. "Repositioning a brand is difficult. And the more classic the brand, the more difficult it is."

Procter & Gamble has seen time and effort pay off with Old Spice, whose irreverent advertising since 2007 has helped it reach younger men.

The brand once known as a cheap cologne now includes products such as deodorant and body washes. Ads spoof old-school Old Spice ads with the sailor and use a tongue-in-cheek approach to sexy.

"It's been almost 2½ years of not taking ourselves too seriously," says Jay Gooch, Old Spice brand spokesman. "And we've achieved the goal of deepening our relationship with 18-to-34 males."

New marketing:

•**Miracle Whip.** The condiment was introduced in 1934 as a cheaper alternative to mayonnaise. And while pricing may be comparable today, the taste is not.



The florist network FTD is sprucing up everything from its ads to its website.

Kraft is promoting its zingier taste alternative to mayonnaise with the new message "don't be so mayo" and marketing that includes a social-networking application known as a "zinger."

"This is a big change for us," says Chris Kempczinski, Kraft senior vice president. "We used to market to moms. The campaign now is more toward the 18- to 34-year-old consumer. We want to re-engage these young consumers and get them into the franchise."

Now is the time, Kempczinski says, as people "look for cheaper, quicker meal solutions."

Marketing includes TV ads and the social-networking application developed by digital agency AKQA. The widgetlike device can be downloaded and lets people send, or "zing," messages.

•**FTD.** The 100-year-old network of 20,000 independent florists has a new website, a new look for its Mercury Man logo, new ads and new products, including a luxury line starting at \$179.

"This collection is not for everyone, but until recently, we didn't have any products for those who thought to give a higher-quality arrangement for special occasions," CEO Mark Goldston says.

"We look at this as sort of our Mercedes SL that's rotating in the middle of the showroom floor that will help them sell a lot of C-Classes and E-Classes," he says. "And it's really critical to the imagery of our company."

•**Western Union.** The 150-year-old money-transfer service began its first global ad campaign in February. The change comes as customers are cutting back on how often they send money to family abroad.

The upbeat ads that try to create an emotional bond with consumers and features the message "yes!" as the answer to questions about how to connect with loved ones.

"It's a very positive campaign, and it's very uplifting," says Kelly Kristin, a Western Union spokeswoman. "And it has good timing, too."

ASK THE AD TEAM

Q: Where was the ad for the Mercedes GLK 350 filmed? The car seems to be driving through an old European city. The last scene in the ad, in front of an old building with a triangular roof and a round window, looks very familiar and I keep trying to remember if I have seen it. Thanks.



Mercedes-Benz
The Mercedes-Benz GLK 350 rolls through Italy.

—Beth McLain Greenville, S.C.

A: If you have been to Tuscany or Rome chances are you have seen it. The luxury-carmaker and its ad agency Merkle+Partners ventured to Italy to capture the car's agility through those tiny curved roads in those beautiful locations. The Tuscany shoot was mostly in the Siena region, Mercedes-Benz spokeswoman Donna Boland says. "They were looking for narrow streets because the name of the game is narrow for the GLK," Boland says. "They wanted to show off the size and the handling since those are two big points for the GLK."

Boland says the crew filmed for three days, and those people on the streets are residents who agreed to appear in the ad — at no cost.

Q: Can you please tell me anything about the music in a current Toyota Corolla commercial? I realize there seem to be several Corolla commercials running now, this one just has a woman driving a Corolla. Thank you.

—Doug Jensen, Natick, Mass.

A: With help from ad agency Saatchi & Saatchi, Toyota's national ad agency, the Ad Team was able to find out that the music is an original score for the regional ad by TCAA USA.


The music helps set the tone for a calm anticipation of the rising sun to help set the big selling point: "Toyota Corolla. Reliable as the sunrise," says Dan Connors, chief operating officer for TCAA's Boston office.

"Different emotions called different instruments into play," Connors says. "Strings, piano, and guitar gave energy and assurance. French horns were added to create peak points and moments of heroism."

The ad runs in 49 markets in 11 states, and though it is made to drive people into showrooms, as most dealer ads are designed to do, the ad has a very national-brand feel about it. "We try to go for something that looks like a million bucks without spending that much," Connors says.

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