

Our Favorite 11 Infomercials

The Snuggie, Chia Pet, Oxi Clean and SlapChop Have All Captured the Nation's Interest

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It slices, it dices and it's dirt cheap! And in [this down economy](#) you are probably seeing more [infomercials](#) for it -- or any number of other products -- on your TV screen.

But wait, there's more & many mainstream advertisers struggling with the recession have cut their ad budgets. To fill that void, the makers of some ["as-seen-on-TV" products](#) have stepped up and increased their pitches.

One of the reasons for the increased attention in tough time is that these ads entice people by offering a perceived discount or more bang for your buck, said Robert Passikoff, founder and president of the brand consulting firm Brand Keys.

"They have always factored in the deal, which is something, more and more, the economy is forcing people to looking for," Passikoff said.

You know the lines: And that's not all & buy now and we'll throw in the following tools. Or how about: But wait, use your credit card and we'll double your order.

"There's always been a more-for-less money is better kind of resonance to that kind of offer," he said. "But still it depends what it is."

And why do these ads resonate so much with people?

"Part of it is that it reaches out and actually touches them. Being on TV provides a broader audience than most other places. So often many more people get to see this new wonderful and different product," Passikoff said. "There is a pattern to the advertised-on-TV-items like [the Snuggie](#) as such and that it's being done in high levels of repetition, very broadly."

Chris Edmondson, a vice president at Fitzgerald & Co., an advertising firm, adds that: "People are most attracted to infomercials and as-seen-on-TV products because people get to see the products in use and that reduces the risk associated with any purchase decision. When people are more conscious about the ways they spend their dollars, any opportunity to see the product in use and see how they will benefit from it is going to make them more confident in buying the product."

With that in mind, we decided it might just be time to revisit our favorite -- new and old -- products sold on TV.

This isn't an endorsement of any particular product & some made the list just because they are so wacky and

unusual, regardless of whether they're worth the money (we're not saying which ones.) And yes, of course there are plenty of items that didn't make the list (feel free to add your favorites in the comment section below.)

Top 11 Infomercial Products

Ronco Showtime Rotisserie Inventor and TV pitchman Ron Popeil boiled cooking down to a simple catchphrase for Americans: "Set it, and forget it." With his Showtime Rotisserie oven, he promised that "fresh, healthful food has never been easier to prepare." Popeil would pair the offer with knife sets and flavor injectors that he also invented. Ronco went public in mid-2005 through a \$50-million reverse merger with Fi-Tek, and Popeil divested his interest that year. Ronco filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in mid-2007, but is now back in business, again selling the Showtime rotisserie.

The Snuggie: The Blanket With Sleeves This TV product became an instant hit with its own cult following. The concept here is pretty simple: It's a blanket that keeps you warm and gives you the freedom to use your hands. Yes, you might look a bit silly wearing it, but that hasn't stopped this blanket from flying off store shelves. The Snuggie has sparked a global cult following, Facebook fan clubs and close to 7 million sales. Across the country there have been Snuggie pub crawls where hundreds of people don their blankets and go from bar to bar drinking. The initial run sold out in the U.S. Yes, sold out.

Great Looking Hair Forget hair weaves or expensive drugs. Why not just cover that bald spot with spray paint. Spray paint? That's right, Ron Popeil doesn't just make rotisserie ovens & he also helps people look like they have a full head of hair. Cover that bald spot, or for women fix those thinning hair problems with just a quick spray or two. The product is supposed to look like real hair and stands up to rain.

Oxi Clean As Billy Mays, who recently died, used to say when pitching this product: "It's Amazing." The cleaner is purportedly makes tough stains disappear like magic. While we did not test this ourselves, it has its own rabid following, thanks in part to the familiar voice of Mays. So how does it work? Well, according to the company, "more than 15 years ago scientists came up with a way to harness the power of oxygen to clean better than ever before." Somehow the oxygen interacts with the stains and creates bubbles & that's how you supposedly know it's working. Oxi Clean is owned by Church & Dwight, which also makes Arm and Hammer.

Chia Pet If you're looking for a low-commitment pet, consider raising -- or rather growing -- a Chia Pet. Within days of adding water to these animal-shaped clay figurines, you can watch your Chia Pet grow a coat of green herb sprouts that look like the animal's fur or hair. Also available as Chia Head, the product was developed by Joseph Enterprises, the same makers as the Clapper. The product even has its own catchy jingle (Does "ch-ch-ch-chia!" ring a bell?) Variations of the Chia Pet include Chia Shrek, Chia Bunny and Chia Herb Garden.

The Clapper Who knew turning off the lights could be such a snap & or a clap? If you hook up the Clapper to any standard electrical outlet, you can activate lamps and other household devices with the clap of your hand. An upgraded version of the Clapper allows you to control multiple devices depending on how many times you clap. If the product doesn't still doesn't sound familiar, you'll probably at least recognize the Clapper's memorable "Clap On, Clap Off" jingle.

ShamWow "You'll say wow every time" if you use TV pitchman Vince Offer's ShamWow. A cross between a towel and a sponge, the ShamWow claims to ease any of your chores -- from removing carpet stains to washing the car. Especially lazy individuals may not have to work as hard at home, as the German-made ShamWow holds 12 times its weight in liquid and lasts 10 years. And for an added bonus, Offer says his product doesn't drip or make a mess. Maybe it is the perfect replacement for the paper towel.

SlapChop This culinary tool promises you're going to have an exciting life now. Who knew you could have so much fun in the kitchen? It will dice, chop and mince in seconds. Everything from vegetables, fruits and nuts can be cut "quickly and easily," the company says. As pitchman Vince Offer puts it: "You love salad, you hate making it." And like almost every TV offer, if you buy the Slap Chop, a cheese grater (called Graty) gets thrown in. But that's not all & if you call in the next 20 minutes -- well anytime really -- they will double your order.

Ped Egg You don't need a pedicure for beautiful feet, just a Ped Egg. One of TV's most popular foot products, the Ped Egg is the "ultimate foot file" that gets rid of dry skin using stainless steel micro-files. Sound painful? The infomercial claims Ped Egg is so gentle, it won't burst a balloon. And yes the balloon experiments is tested on TV. As the name suggests, the Telebrands product is shaped like an egg and includes a special storage compartment to help clean up filings. If you want your feet to have "the incredible baby soft look and feel that everybody loves," this may be the product for you.

PediPaws This product is designed to give your pet a perfect pedicure in just minutes. The selling point: "treat your pet like family." The commercial shows painful pet grooming moments, and just as you are squirming in your seat, it offers the perfect solution: PediPaws. There is even a veterinarian who comes on TV to vouch for the product. Just like the Ped Egg, it promises no mess to clean up.

The Stick-Up Lightbulb First man invented fire. Eventually, the lightbulb was invented, but with it you were tethered to electrical wiring. Not anymore. TV pitchman Anthony Sullivan explains that with the Stick-Up Lightbulb "now you can have light anytime, anyplace, anywhere." No messy and expensive wires; just a bulb that you can install without an electrician. It is battery operated and turns on with a pull cord. Perfect for that closet, tool shed or other out-of-the-way spot. And if the power goes out, no worries. The bulb easily slides out of the wall and can be used as an emergency flashlight.

Nathalie Tadena contributed to this story.

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