

Ad Trends

## C'mon, Get Happy: Advertisers Want Consumers To Lighten Up



:30 Pre-roll

### Down with doom and gloom. It's time to spend!

After a long winter and a grim recession luxury-faucet maker **Brizo** wants to give consumers "a license to dream." Online videos and print ads created by Young & Laramore for Brizo's high-end, touch-sensitive Talo, Venuto and Virage faucets feature vivid colors that morph into butterflies, flowers, mermaids and fish.

New ad campaigns suggest marketers are eager to shake off the gloom of tough economic times—and they hope consumers will do the same. While some economists aren't sure the tough times are history, advertisers don't seem to care. Companies are rolling out carefree ads that use humor, colorful images and upbeat language to get consumers to lighten up—and open up their wallets.

"What you make people feel is as important as what you make," goes the voice-over in a commercial from **BMW** of North America's "Story of Joy" ad campaign, which includes print ads featuring happy-looking adults, kids and dogs with headlines that lead off with "Joy is ..." The campaign was created by GSD&M Idea City.

**Procter & Gamble** even seems to thumb its nose at money-pinching buyers of personal care products in ads for Old Spice. In TV spots, Isaiah Mustafa taunts women with recession-induced goodie withdrawal by offering "two tickets to that thing you love," before the tickets turn into diamonds. Spots featuring Mustafa and his treats have racked up more than 8 million views since they broke in February.

Fun and games? Those are reappearing in ads. Interpublic agency Deutsch L.A.'s playful campaign for **Volkswagen**, "Punch Dub," invites consumers to play an updated version of the game "Punch Buggy," in which the first person to spot a VW slugs his or her friend on the arm. Stevie Wonder and 30 Rock's Tracy Morgan even get in on the game in ads.

**Microsoft** even promotes the idea of carefree travel in ads for the launch of its new mobile phone brand, Kin. In "The Journey," by AgencyTwoFifteen, Rosa Salazar, a lollipop-loving Brooklyn comedian, hits the road to meet as many of her 824 social networking friends as possible. Consumers and marketers were in the dumps last year when total U.S. advertising expenditures fell 12.3% in 2009 to \$125.3 billion, compared with 2008, says ad tracker Kantar Media in New York but some agency executives say marketers are willing to spend again.

"There is a market turn toward the positive," says Deutsch N.Y. Chief Creative Officer Greg DiNoto. "That's a smart marketing strategy for any brand when you're emerging from a recession." Brands need to be associated with winning."

A few advertisers hope upbeat taglines will do the trick. **Amway's** latest campaign, one with an estimated \$25 million behind it, features the tagline "The Power of Positivity." Ads, created by Omnicom's Element 79, feature friendly farmers and helpful neighbors and suggest that Amway is a company doing its part by creating jobs for those affected by the recession.

Similarly, **AT&T** this month unveiled a new slogan, "Rethink Possible", as part of a major campaign from Omnicom's BBDO North America that pitches attitude more than products.

Hamish McLennan, global chairman and CEO of WPP's Young & Rubicam, warns, however, that many consumers and advertisers aren't quite ready to spend money again. "Most people are cautiously optimistic that it's going to get better, but we're not seeing precrash levels—and we won't for a long time," he says.