

HOT POINTS for The Week of January 22, 2007

THERE'S ALWAYS THE FEAR.

The fear that there won't be enough new business.

So the new advertiser wants to hedge his bets.

This just happened in LA.

"We're coming to you because you have a listener base that could bring us more luxury car buyers."

Fair enough.

"We also want to talk about how we'll do a free credit check over the phone, and we have cars for every budget."

Hunh?

WHY DOES YOUR LUXURY CAR BUYER CARE ABOUT A FREE CREDIT CHECK AND CARS FOR EVERY BUDGET?

I've said this before. It's often difficult for an advertiser to wrap his brain around it.

If you spend 40 seconds talking about used luxury cars, the only person who's invested in that ad is a guy who wants a luxury car.

And the guy who wants a luxury car already has (a) a pretty good idea of his credit and (b) has no need for a high-mileage Yugo with a Landau top and denim upholstery.

Free credit checks and cars for every budget wave a red flag in the face of the luxury car buyer.

It says, "We're not really used to catering to luxury car buyers. We're used to selling cheap cars to the credit challenged."

In other words...

“YOU PROBABLY DON’T WANT TO SHOP WITH US.”

No, not every luxury car buyer will walk away with this message.

But many will.

One of my favorite radio ad people, Brad Stewart in Sacramento, mentions how he was able to convince his jewelry store client to stop talking about charm bracelets and cheap jewelry in their ads..

He was finally able to convince them that it was a weak use of their ad dollar. Every sale for cheap jewelry takes just as long as a sale for good, expensive jewelry.

And by advertising the cheap jewelry, they were inviting cheap customers to come and waste their time.

By focusing solely on the diamonds, guess what happened?

More diamond customers.

And fewer pursuers of cheap-o chintz.

But many advertisers might require a slightly bigger, more global example to help drive home this point.

HOTEL SOFITEL IS NOT LEAVING THE LIGHT ON FOR YOU.

That’s right.

They’re not welcoming you with a folksy Tom Bodett.

Instead of a porch light, Hotel Sofitel has a red velvet rope. You must have the infinite courage of a fat wallet to move beyond that rope.

We’re talking a stuffy hotel chain for important people who have (a) huge expense accounts or (b) more money than sense.

And with resorts in Morocco, Bali and Biarritz, Sofitel is definitely catering to the Marquis Jetcard crowd.

Now, there’s a Sofitel New York.

Sofitel New York has a \$609 a night room with a marble bath and a feather bed.

What would happen if the ads for Sofitel New York said, “By the way, we also have a \$50 a night motel in Piscataway, just in case you’re interested.”

Would Donald Trump would suddenly say, “You know, I was going to stay in this luxurious hotel that caters and bows and scrapes to my every need even before I know I have it. But heck, maybe I’d rather be slumming it in a \$50 a night room with two queen beds, a 19-inch TV and a view of the turnpike.”

In a million years, why would Sofitel New York say something like that?

Because they can.

THEY’RE JUST SMART ENOUGH TO KNOW THEY SHOULDN’T.

The company that owns Sofitel also owns Motel 6.

You’ll never find any mention of Motel 6 in Sofitel’s marketing.

And you’ll certainly never find any mention of Sofitel in Motel 6’s marketing.

Go to Sofitel’s website, you see pictures of gorgeous international resorts and very high-end business meeting facilities.

Go to the Motel 6 website and you find a NASCAR promotion.

These companies are not crossing over.

But do a search for Accor hotels in the New York area, you find both that Motel 6 on Shelton Road and the Sofitel on West 44th.

So the next time a client wants to target luxury and economy customers in the same ad, you can ask him...

“WOULD YOU ALSO LIKE FRIES WITH THAT?”

Because it’ll make almost as much sense.

And probably sell just as many French fries.

As always,

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