

# PRODUCTION OF YOUR INFOMERCIAL

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TV-05.

## **PRODUCTION OF YOUR INFOMERCIAL**

### **7. INFOMERCIAL FORMATS**

The right format is at the heart of every infomercial project. To begin with, the show is usually a half-hour in length, and there will be significant expense for production.

Your production cost, the way you present your information, the pacing of your show, and its ability to keep the audience glued to the TV depends on your infomercial's format.

Following are two examples of effective formats. Time-Life produced their "Rock N Roll of the '60s" infomercial as a music video documentary hosted by a disc jockey who presents a succession of music videos from a broadcast control booth. Psychic Friends Network made their infomercial a talk show hosted by Dionne Warwick before a live audience.

**THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS THE ONE MOST EFFECTIVE FORMAT.** Shoot your infomercial in a format that best demonstrates the benefits of your product.

Having a roomful of people with serious bald spots may not be the most aesthetically pleasing sight on television. However, it was certainly the most effective way for Ron Popiel to introduce his GLH Formula, a baldness treatment.

If you're having trouble deciding between different formats, watching some of the most popular regular TV programs may offer some interesting clues. One thing to think about is what your viewers are accustomed to watching on television today. One example of popular programming is tabloid-type programs like "A Current Affair", "Rescue 911", and "Hard Copy." These shows present investigative segments which explore specific subjects in an exciting and entertaining manner.

### **8. RULES OF SCRIPTING**

Once you've established your primary objective and decided on a format, it's time to write your infomercial.

**Rule #1.** Unless you're an experienced writer who can create a fast-paced, well-staged, logically arranged, audio-visual sales presentation, don't even try writing your infomercial.

**Rule #2.** Instead, prepare an outline for a script writer. Explain what your

product is, its use, its user benefits, and its economic value.

Rule #3. If you think you possess the inherent talent to pen your own presentation, keep this in mind:

**KEEP SELLING.** Every word must draw blood. You're not there to look cute or impress your competitors with how creative you are. Focus on the product.

Never stop selling. Remember, if the TV viewer does not reach out for the phone to place an order, it won't work.

**KEEP IT INTERESTING.** With the advent of remote control, your infomercial must be engaging. You may have a potentially good product, but if you cannot hold the viewer's attention, the remote control is your worst enemy.

## 9. BLOCKSCRIPTING

An infomercial is divided into several smaller segments that are usually repeated within the half-hour show. This is a result of infomercial writers using block scripting (also known as "pocket" scripting) for an infomercial.

As a rule of thumb, to keep an infomercial interesting, something entertaining and informative must be happening every 60 seconds.

When preparing your outline, imagine a channel hopper landing on your infomercial at any given part. You have about 60 seconds to give this viewer an idea of what you're selling to keep him interested. If you fail to keep that viewer's attention, you've just lost a potential sale. A fast-paced script will keep your viewer watching.

## 10. SCRIPTING CHECKLIST

Decide which of the following elements will make up the core of your presentation. These ingredients will influence the style of your show and the manner by which your product will be presented to your TV audience.

**TESTIMONIALS.** This format presents satisfied customers talking about their successful experiences with your product. You can have actual product endorsers, or you can hire paid performers to do dramatized endorsements.

**INTERVIEWS.** If you choose to include this format in your infomercial, you must decide whether the interview will panel (with a moderator) or one-on-one (an interviewer with one guest at a time). Will the interview be in a studio or on location?

**CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENTS.** A celebrity can add credibility and recognition to

your product. A familiar face can make channel hoppers stop and watch your infomercial. Effectively used, a celebrity can be a wise investment. (See section on Celebrities.)

**CASE HISTORIES.** A product with a demonstrable before-and-after effect, such as diet plans, cosmetics and fitness products, can provide a compelling argument for your product.

**DEMONSTRATIONS.** If your product's primary selling features are convenience and ease-of-use, you must capitalize on product demonstration as the backbone of your presentation.

**ORDERING INFORMATION.** This segment usually lasts 30 to 45 seconds. This portion of the infomercial tells the viewer the product's price, accessories, tie-in items, bonuses, and refund guarantees that come with each order. It shows how the product is packaged and gives the delivery options available. It can be integrated into the DRTV spot or is presented independently.

**DRTV SPOT.** This is usually a 2 minute spot that summarizes vital points about your product and the ordering procedure. To emphasize important points, most effective DRTV spots use footage lifted from the infomercial itself. The spot should be repeated at least 3 times within the infomercial.