

## **Google Needs an Infomercial**

### **Driving Consumer Electronics Success With DRTV**

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Google needs an infomercial – a half hour paid program. So does Kindle. And so do many new technology products made for consumer use.

Truth is, the value of most technology is hard to see and hard to understand. Infomercials reveal that value, showing consumers why the technology is meaningful. Even better, infomercials do this while reaching a mass consumer audience as well as the growing market of home based businesses.

#### ***Why Google?***

Google is an excellent example of a company who needs an infomercial. Their engineers have put heart and soul into a dizzying array of online products that position Google for excellent additional profits. Except, the innovations are unknown outside Google and a few early adopters. As a result, this superb technology asset underperforms financially.

Google could capture this lost opportunity if they chose to communicate with an infomercial. And when they did, they would drive short-term profit while building brand value that would box out future competitors.

#### ***From Bold Risk Taking to Risk Avoidance***

In my nearly 30 years in and around technology it's always been clear that the companies who take the smartest risks, develop the most exciting new products. But once they start to communicate, tech companies often lose this boldness - leaving superb technologies to fail through risk aversion.

Many technology companies seek communication safety with the local outlet of a multi-national agency. This agency's name may make investors happy. But for new products their work

nearly always fails – because “award winning” advertising rarely moves consumers to action.

Other companies dislike the investment required for communication. So they try to succeed on the cheap, hoping that consumers will organically discover their products through online osmosis or social media. (I love the power of social media. But it's not a good way to drive the release of new products.)

#### ***Infomercials “Cross the Chasm”***

To understand the power of an infomercial for technology, consider the “Chasm” model from Geoffrey Moore's book “Crossing the Chasm”. Moore identifies the large chasm that separates the earliest “Innovator” buyers from the much larger “Majority” markets.

In my experience, the only companies that cross the chasm quickly have good in-depth communication. Hence infomercials – and they can work whether your product is software or hardware; internet based or mobile services; BtoB products or mass consumer products.

#### ***Did you really say “infomercials”?***

Some technologists think they've moved “beyond” something as old

school as television – much less paid programming. But they haven't. Today's TV is more vital and alive than ever. And today's technology infomercials feature innovative, high quality products.

These infomercials are exciting, fresh and highly compelling. They engage consumers with vital and up-to-date messages. And, by capturing the interest of a mass audience, they drive activity everywhere - online stores, brick and mortar retail, mobile service consumption, and catalogs.

### ***An ROI Medium***

Infomercials deliver outstanding ROI and are one of the lowest cost ways to reach a mass audience. When executed to sell directly, profits from sales can pay for most, if not all, of the media investment. When used to acquire new customers, infomercial lifetime value is generally higher than the value of customers acquired through other channels.

Even better, they introduce new products faster and with more strength than traditional advertising methods. And they build your brand by ensuring that consumers understand the outstanding value you offer.

### ***Succeeding with Infomercials***

What should you do to take advantage of this untapped opportunity? Of course, avoid cheesy "yell & sell"

### **About Doug Garnett**

Doug Garnett is a pioneer in the branded use of DRTV as well as founder & CEO of Atomic Direct – an advertising agency specializing in brands, consumer strategy, infomercials, and driving sales with television. He has developed and consulted on DRTV campaigns for technology brands like AT&T, DirecTV, Netpliance, and Apple Computer as well as traditional industry brands like the Drill Doctor, White's Electronics, and Kreg Tool. Doug is also an adjunct professor of advertising in the business school at Portland State University. For more information, visit [www.atomicdirect.com](http://www.atomicdirect.com).

techniques used for skin care or fitness.

Instead, evaluate an array of large and small agencies remembering a few key pointers:

1. Be thoroughly strategic. An investment in strategy and research up front will dramatically increase your success.
2. Don't be distracted by long lists of clients - lists that may reflect a long list of failures. Look, instead, for your agency to be a long-term partner.
3. Only consider agencies that listen to you, don't invent creative strategy in the first meeting, and will be able to articulate something that your current team hasn't been able to articulate.
4. Avoid agencies whose work looks and feels like extended versions of 30-second spots. While *you* might enjoy viewing your 30-second spot stretched to 30-minutes, consumers won't watch it long enough to hear what you have to say.
5. Look for an agency that integrates your infomercial with your other PR, traditional media, social media, and online efforts.

But perhaps most of all, take the "risk" of looking at half hour television. Then you'll be on the road to crossing the chasm.