Broadcast Communications Media, Inc. President Doug Frankel

*Doug Frankel is the founder and president of **Broadcast Communications Media, Inc.**, an innovative marketing and media company. The Broadcast Communications one-stop shopping approach provides client products and services with resources and valuable relationships in all facets of the direct response process. Prior to starting Broadcast Communications Media in spring 2002, Frankel spent over 11 years as a partner with United Broadcast Sales, Inc.*

Electronic Retailer: How does advertising with direct response differ from general advertising?

Doug Frankel: Direct response advertising is accountable advertising, where every dollar advertised has an accountable result that is also measurable. For each dollar spent, the advertiser can account for the performance of the advertisement, whether driving calls to an inbound call center, or driving traffic to a website. General advertising creates consumer awareness and helps to build the product brand, however, the advertising is only measurable in general terms.

ER: What process do you use to determine if a product or service is suitable for direct response marketing?

Frankel: We like to look at products that have a great story to tell, strong potential consumer awareness, and a large universe of interest to draw from. Recurring continuity revenue becomes very important to the direct response model, and products that have a recurring, monthly auto-ship revenue are a key component to sustain the overall success of a direct response marketing campaign and increase average customer value. These types of products are more media scaleable, and have a better chance to succeed and grow.

ER: In a down economy, why does utilizing direct response make even more sense?

Frankel: We have always believed that direct response advertising is economy proof. In a down economy, companies are looking to maximize their marketing dollars, and direct response advertising becomes the most economically efficient way to market products and services at the lowest possible rates available to generate the best return on marketing dollars. When the economy is more robust, it still makes sense to get more bang for your dollar, and direct response advertising will only enhance the campaign.

ER: How does media buying for radio differ from television?

Frankel: In direct response, both radio and television have to be bought with the same "roll up your sleeves mentality," and grind out the best rates possible. Radio buying requires a unique understanding of the playing field, knowing what kind of stations, formats and targets a specific advertiser needs, and making sure that there is enough frequency on each station to generate enough response from the listener. TV buying requires the same lowest rate possible philosophy, but typically TV does not have the amount of inventory or pricing flexibility that many radio stations have.

ER: What techniques have you found to be most effective for closing a DR sale? Is it all in the offer or call to action?

Frankel: The offer and call to action are important. Depending on the product or service, free offers, special offers, risk free offers or free with order offers become critical to the performance of the product in direct response. Creating the "perceived" consumer desire is important and needs to be tested, reviewed and analyzed to evaluate the overall success of a DR campaign.

ER: How does the dynamic shift when working on a multi-cultural campaign compared with a standard U.S. spot?

Frankel: In a multi-cultural campaign, there are a lot of elements to be aware of including the demographic, product interest in the specific culture, and the testing of media geared directly to that culture—both qualitatively and quantitatively. It is key to do your homework and gather as much information as possible that can help with the media buy to make sure that you are targeting to the best audience possible. The same principles apply in standard U.S. spots, but we generally are more familiar with the culture here.