

MEET BRUCE GOLD:

THE MAN BEHIND SOME OF TV'S BEST SELLING INFOMERCIALS

Plus! Hear his take on what storefronts can learn from infomercials.

By Nicole Leinbach Reyhle



PHOTO: BRUCE GOLD PRODUCTIONS

Retail isn't always about selling in brick and mortar stores. Infomercial pro Bruce Gold shares his insight on how selling to consumers on TV isn't all that different than selling in storefronts.

Retail comes in all shapes and sizes. From big box stores to mom and pop boutiques to e-commerce to infomercials. Can you tell us a bit more about your platform of selling to consumers? How did you get into this business?

Through my company, Goldmine Productions, we usually launch a product via a 30 minute infomercial or what we call a two minute Direct Response spot. For lower priced and easily demonstrated products we tend to use a two minute spot. The more expensive and harder to explain products lend themselves better to the 30 minute infomercial. After success via TV, we bring the products to the web and traditional retail. In most cases we end up distributing the products internationally too.

Interesting! How did you get involved in this?

I had a product myself that I wanted to get on TV in the 90's and through that learning process I have been able to help others with their products via infomercial, web, and international distribution. The product was EagleEye Sunglasses, which still does a lot in sales internationally through infomercials and retail. Which brings up a good point... Just because a product slows up in the US, it does not mean there is not strong demand for it somewhere else. This could be true for retail storefronts, also.

We couldn't agree more. In the case of storefronts, it may mean the difference of one town versus another in the US. Location really does influence product and store success.

And timing, too.

Very true! Speaking of timing, the infomercial business model has been around for a while and does not seem to be fading despite many other avenues for B2C sales. Why do you think this is?

Although not every product is appropriate for an infomercial, if they are it is the quickest and most profitable way to launch a product short-term – with a launching pad to retail for the long-term. A great product may be selling just Ok in traditional retail store fronts, but then with TV exposure the same product can increase sales tenfold in retail to what it was selling prior to the TV exposure. I think the Snuggie was a great example of this.

The Snuggie is a household name now thanks to infomercials. What do you believe independently owned retailers can learn from this type of sales strategy?

The offers we do on TV are tested over and over to get the best net response. So in the end, when you see an offer like buy two get one free, we have tested many other offers. I would encourage retailers to test different offers or promotions more often. We had a product that we sold for \$39.95, however when we ran that same offer at \$79.95 PLUS get one free, we had a much stronger response!

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That's great advice! Any other offers that stand out to you that have been successful?

I'm almost embarrassed to say, but I was able to help a Direct Response TV spot that was not performing. It was for a product called "ZAP", a restoring product. In the original offer they sold two bottles of ZAP restorer for \$19.95. I simply changed the offer to one bottle of ZAP the "restorer" and one bottle to ZAP the "cleaner" to really differentiate that ZAP is not just a regular cleaner, but a restorer. The spot performed much better even though buyers were getting less value since ZAP cleaner was just 1/10 ZAP restorer mixed with 9/10 water. However, it did distinguish that the bottle of ZAP restorer was not just a cleaner.

Sounds like this was a great example of how a change of words and general communication can often help customers better understand things – and ultimately, help increase sales. Well done! It seems that you have a strong understanding of

what customers want and what makes them buy something. Can you elaborate on this?

We like to sell products on TV that fill a need and improve your life. For example when you can show someone how you can save them time or improve their looks it seems to be a lot easier sale for us than a passive product such as a clock or socks. Really, it's about speaking to their emotions.

We couldn't agree more with you. With so much competition in every retail category these days, what do you believe helps any retailer stand out among their competition?

If you are not the least expensive retailer, I think you want to be the one known with the best customer service. I always try to make sure our customers are happy in every way, which I can't say is true for the whole infomercial industry.

Thanks for sharing your thoughts, Bruce! It's always fun to gain another perspective on retail.

Editor's Note: Have a product you think is right for TV? Email Bruce at bruce@gpiv.com to see what he thinks! 