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2-2012

HaworthNews (02/2012)

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Western Michigan University, "HaworthNews (02/2012)" (2012). *Haworth College of Business News*. 28. https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/business_news/28

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Super Bowl Ads

For almost 10 years the advertising and marketing professors at Western Michigan University have ranked the Super Bowl ads. Each year we would gather and painstakingly rate the ads for their creativity, strategy, execution and production values on a 10-point scale. We've debated the best and worst of the ads and loved it! Other universities and consumers across the country have also weighed in and polls abound on Super Bowl 'Ad' Sunday.

But then we got to thinking—What do our students think about the Super Bowl ads? We ask them before the game; we ask them after the game. But what about during the game? So this year the WMU faculty will tackle something different. We've put together a great group to share their immediate uncensored reactions to the ads in real time—from WMU professors to current students studying advertising, as well as recent ad grads, and our advertising alumni working in industry. They'll all be adding their comments here. As the moderator I'll try to keep the comments on track and “clean”; but the idea is to get everyone's first thoughts and not the scripted statements you normally see in a news release.

So let the Ad Games begin!

~Dr. Karen Lancendorfer, Associate Professor of Advertising & Marketing

Audi

Audi using vampires doesn't seem like a good strategy since Volvo is already tied into the Twilight movies.—Dr. Kelley O'Reilly, Assistant Professor of Sales and Business Marketing

The Audi commercial is a little too “Twilight-y” for me... but I guess it gets the headlight/daylight message across.—Rachel, alumni working in Chicago.

I agree with you here Rachel, I think the vampire phase is getting old.—Hayden, recent advertising grad.

Hyundai

Clara, recent Marketing graduate—I still wouldn't consider purchasing a Hyundai.

I'm in the market for a car. Hyundai Veloster's ad grabbed my interest. Love the touch of humor at the end. Didn't expect it.—Hariz, International MBA student.

M&Ms

Naked M&Ms—too funny! Definitely got a huge laugh in the room! —Dr. Karen Lancendorfer, Associate Professor of Advertising.

And Hariz, International MBA student agrees—"I can't stop laughing on the floor."

Nice humor M&M... Well done—Kyle, current advertising student.

The M&M's commercial cracked me up- "so it's THAT kinda party"... great use of a popular song too- I think that ad can attract a wide target.—Rachel, WMU alumni working in Chicago.

Pepsi

I thought the Pepsi commercial with Elton John was funny. The use of recording artists also reminded me of the older Pepsi commercials back when Britney Spears was in her prime. As a millennial, I enjoy a little celebrity association.—Hayden, recent advertising grad.

Chevy Truck

Chevy apocalypse commercial was a downer! Why are they bringing up the end of the world???—Rachel, WMU alumni working in Chicago.

But Lindsay (current ad student) disagrees—I like this ad for Chevy but I don't get the frogs at the end. Liked the whole play on it being tough enough to survive the end of the world.

Bud Light Platinum

Kyle—current ad student—We have seen two Bud Light Platinum ads and still they have not told us the differences between platinum and original... One of them being a much higher alcohol content.

Tax Act.com

TaxAct commercial was a little gross?–Rachel, ad alumni.

I thought the TaxAct commercial was clever, however right after I saw it I forgot what it was for until I read Rachel's post.–Hayden, recent ad grad.

Go.Daddy.com

I've always found GoDaddy commercials to be tasteless- that one was no different.–Rachel, ad grad working in Chicago.

Mike, current advertising student–GoDaddy needs a new strategy... Sex only sells to a point. They don't even advertise who they are anymore or what they really do.

Budweiser

Classic Clydesdale spot–well done–Kyle, current ad student

Rachel, ad grad, Hmm... interesting historical take for Budweiser. May have something to do with the popularity of the HBO show Boardwalk Empire?

Robby, current ad student–Well done, Budweiser, well done.

Awesome Budweiser spot–Mike, current ad student.

Budweiser commercial just made at least five people at the bar get a Budweiser.–Megan, current ad student.

Volkswagen

Really liked the dog/Volkswagen commercial. Humor and puppy love, great combination.–Lindsay, current ad student.

I want a dog!–Robby, current ad student.

I really liked the VW ad with the dog trying to getting in shape! So cute! I don't know if I would immediately connect that to a car, though- maybe a dog food?–Rachel, ad alumni.

Haha I liked the ending of the VW spot, I was semi-grossed out at first with the monster people around the bar, but I liked the reference from last year's Super Bowl ad.–Hayden, recent ad grad.

Sketchers

Cute dog, but I can see how the animal rights activists are angry showing the greyhound racing—Dr. Karen Lancendorfer

Lindsay, current ad student—AWESOME SKETCHERS COMMERCIAL! So funny and made the point they are for running now. Every single person I am with just cracked up.

Hayden, recent ad grad—Hahah great sketchers ad. My cousin has a dog that looks just like that which made it extra funny for me.

Coca-Cola

Hariz, International MBA student—Great! Coke is running ads in accordance to which team is leading? I think I see a pattern there!

You do know that these ads are being used in real time right? Depending on how the game goes they are using different ads—Mike, current ad student.

Okay... so this Coke polar bear commercial was better- more football oriented... I think they are trying to bring back the polar bear image- which is nice, because like the M&M characters we grew up with them... but their implementation just isn't impressing me yet—Rachel, ad alumni

Chrysler

Clint Eastwood gave me the chills doing the Chrysler commercial at halftime—Alex, ad alumni working in Pennsylvania.

Gorgeous Imported From Detroit/America ad... beautiful message! Could it have been done in a shorter slot and had the same effect? I'm afraid it may have lost the attention span of some viewers.—Rachel, ad alumni working in Chicago

Big fan of the Clint Eastwood Chrysler commercial. Being from Michigan I love the imported from Detroit campaign in general, but I felt the quote at the end was strong. Great commercial.—Hayden, recent ad grad.

The Chrysler spot didn't give me the same goose bumps as last year's intro of 'imported from Detroit', but it still hit home for all the metro Detroit natives.—Robby, current ad student. More on Chrysler's campaign, I believe that the 'Imported from Detroit' ads are one of the key factors in improving America's opinion of Detroit.

Budweiser

“Grab Some Buds” ...Budweiser is doing it right!!! –Megan, current ad student

The Budweiser through the generations commercial made me want a Budweiser. I can't say that about the other beer commercials so far.–Hayden, recent ad grad.

Really digging the new campaign. Reminds us that Bud is the all American beer without having to say it–Kyle, current ad student.

I don't like them shortening their nickname to “Buds”. Sounds ugly and desperate–Mike, current ad student.

Fiat

Fiat...you're doing it right.–Hariz, International MBA student.

I don't care how sexy the Fiat model is... I'm still not buying that car.–Kyle, current ad student.

Fiat-Thank you for the new creative. Didn't quite understand the other language at first, but the dream to reality brought it all together at the end, good job.–Robby, current ad student.

Finally a Fiat commercial without J-Lo pretending she lives in the ghetto still.–Hayden, recent ad grad.

Bud Light

Another reason why I want a dog.. What was the first dog commercial even about? Bud Light is all I remember–Robby, current ad student

OMG.... I want a dog called We Go... that was cute! AND I liked the affiliation with rescuing dogs brought up and the end!–Rachel, current ad grad working in Chicago.

I said the Budweiser generations ad was the only beer commercial that made me want a beer. I need to take that back after seeing that Bud Light commercial with Wego the dog. Maybe I'm just thirsty?–Hayden, recent ad grad

Herewego... Someone train my dog to do that!–Kyle, current ad grad.

Career Builder

Clever monkeys are so 1995–Mike, current ad student.

Kia

Love the Kia ad. Car looks really good. The ad gave a fun way to express the driving experience.–Hariz, International MBA student.

Samsung

Wow- this Samsung commercial really exploded... loved that they acknowledged that at the end! Just a comment on the product though- who wants a phone with a pen? One more thing for me to lose! Isn't that regressing back to PDAs?–Rachel, ad alumni working in Chicago.

Love how Galaxy Note referenced Apple “cultists” in their ad. I might get this phone.–Hariz, international MBA student.

The game is over and as we conclude our blog tonight, we leave you with this question– which ad was the best?

Here are our students' predictions/thoughts:

Kyle Piazza (current ad student)–Best: M&M. Budweiser generations and Bud Light Here We-Go were close seconds. Worst: GoDaddy.com

Mike Klok (current ad student)–Best: probably M & M., worst... GoDaddy...

Hayden Thompson (recent ad grad)–If I had to pick one it would be the M&M ad, but to be fair it was close call. This would be my top 3 best ads:

- 1) M&M- THIS kind of party
- 2) Chrysler- Imported from Detroit Clint Eastwood
- 3) Budweiser- Through the Generations

Worst: All of the GoDaddy.com ads.

Scott O'Neil (current ad student)–The M&M's commercial was the best in my opinion. I did also like the Bud Light Wego spot and the Kia Sandman ad. As usual, the GoDaddy commercials were just plain terrible.

Megan Trout (current ad student)—Best: Doritos (with the dog) and M&M. Worst: GoDaddy (for their stupid advertising with no reasoning behind it). Also bad—COKE!!! Thought they could do SOOO much better.

Robby Roediger (current ad student)—

Best: Generations of Budweiser: good tie-in to America's past time.

Naked M&Ms: good humor while remaining tasteful.

Chrysler's Imported from Detroit: not as good as the original intro with Eminem, but had the same good vibes about Detroit's culture, giving America a new opinion of the city.

Fiat: just because the J-lo campaign was so awful anything could be an improvement.

Worst:

Coca-Cola: I feel like they weren't very creative this year. They could have done much better.

GoDaddy.com: it's time they come up with a better campaign. They don't even mention what the company actually doesn't anymore.

Neves to share insights for launching a career

Presentation: Produce Your Best Career

Monday, February 13, 5-6:30 pm in the Dean's Conference Room

Register on BroncoJobs calendar: Limit 55 students; free.

After graduating from WMU, Antonio Neves, BBA '99, went from moving to New York City with just \$600, sleeping on a floor and working multiple jobs, to creating a remarkable career in television and starting his own successful company. In this talk, learn how to produce the best experience in your career by identifying meaningful goals, developing your network, asking the right questions and getting uncomfortable.

Antonio Neves

Neves is an award-winning broadcast journalist, author, speaker and founder of THINQACTION. Neves is lead correspondent of the NBC produced MSN business show "Cool Runnings" and his articles on entrepreneurship and innovation appear in Entrepreneur Magazine, MSN Money and Fox Business.

With THINQACTION, Neves coaches young professionals to transform potential into exceptional performance in their lives and careers. His THINQACTION blog is a popular must read for young professionals.

During his broadcast career, Neves has interviewed and profiled high-profile CEOs and entrepreneurs, Grammy and Oscar Award winners and politicians. He began his on-camera career co-hosting Nickelodeon's hit show "U-Pick Live" and he has worked as a host, correspondent and producer with E!, PBS, BET Networks, Advertising Age and more.

A well-respected thought leader, Neves regularly moderates panels and has been a speaker at major events like the Consumer Electronics Show and the ADCOLOR Awards.

A graduate of Western Michigan University, Neves holds a master's degree from the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism. Neves is the author of "Student Athlete 101: College Life Made Easy On & Off The Field" and serves on the advisory board of StudentMentor.org. A Jackson, Mich., native, Neves lives in Los Angeles.

Food Marketing Conference to focus on "Connecting People, Issues and Solutions"

Shopper engagement, changes in consumer behavior and ethical challenges of leadership will be among the topics of discussion at Western Michigan University's 47th Annual Food Marketing Conference on Monday and Tuesday, March 26 and 27, at the Radisson Plaza Hotel in downtown Kalamazoo.

Featured speakers include Susan O'Malley, former president of the National Basketball Association's Washington Wizards Sports & Entertainment, who will share insights on leadership in a talk titled "Connecting People, Issues and Solutions" on Monday evening. Bill Dankworth, vice president of grocery merchandising for The Kroger Company will give his views on environmental and economic factors consumers are facing today in a talk titled "Engaging Customers in a Rapidly Changing World" on Tuesday afternoon.

The conference annually draws more than 500 industry business leaders from around the nation to Kalamazoo. With the theme "Connecting People, Issues and Solutions," the conference kicks off at 4 p.m. Monday with John Phillips, senior vice president of customer supply chain and logistics at PepsiCo, Inc. His presentation and the follow-up executive forum at 4:30 p.m. will examine 12 global mega-trends and what it takes to win in today's changing world. Moderated by Trudy Bourgeois, author, president and founder of the Center for Workforce Excellence, the panel will include Monica Hysell, vice president of Abbott Nutrition, Rob Bartles, president and chief executive officer of Martin's Supermarkets, Darcey Macken, senior vice president at Kellogg

Company, JK Symancyk, chief operating officer of Meijer, and Carla Cooper, president and chief executive officer of Daymon Worldwide.

O'Malley will address this unprecedented era of change in the food industry and the tremendous value of leadership associated with this time of change. She will share innovative approaches that leadership roles require. O'Malley served as the first female president of a professional sports franchise and she will elaborate on the strategies that led to her success.

Breakout Sessions

Tuesday, March 27, 10 a.m. – 11 a.m.

- “Blocking and Tackling to Win at Retail Today” — Craig Rosenblum, partner, Willard Bishop Consulting
- “How Millennials Will Change Food Consumption” — Marilyn Moats Kennedy, president, Moats Kennedy, Inc.
- “Tracking Trends That Matter as Food Competition Heats Up” — Todd Hale, senior vice president for consumer and shopper insights, Nielsen
- “Shopper Engagement in the Digital and Social Media Era” — Kevin Weisberg, chief marketing officer, Lunchbox: Shopper Engagement Solutions

General Session

Tuesday, March 27, 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

- Paul Madura, panel moderator, senior advisor, Endeavor Management
- Sheila Laing, vice president of human resources, Hy-Vee
- Dona Kotzur, regional director of customer service, H-E-B Foods/Drugs
- Diana Copland, vice president, Operations, Busch's Fresh Food Market
- Tom Urtz, vice president of human resources and community relations, ShopRite

At 2 p.m. Dankworth will close the conference by offering ways to improve relationships with customers at a time when shopper options are increasing and customer needs are changing. He has held multiple positions at Kroger in merchandising and store operations in addition to having worked in three other Kroger divisions.

The WMU Annual Food Marketing Conference is presented by WMU's Food and Consumer Package Goods Marketing Program in the Haworth College of Business. Proceeds from the conference support food and CPG marketing scholarships and related program operations.

For more conference information, including cost and registration details, call the event hotline at (269) 387-2132 or visit [the conference website](#).

WMU students take first place in national financial services competition

Two WMU students were first place winners in a financial services industry competition in Phoenix, Ariz, each receiving a \$3,000 scholarship, and placing over teams from Texas Tech and William Paterson Universities.

The team of Alison Huey, accountancy major of Canton, Mich., and Joshua Kallen, advertising and promotion major of Muskegon, Mich., took first place in the first Financial Services National Industry Issues Competition held in late January. The competition, sponsored by the Society of Financial Service Professionals, provided student teams from universities around the country with the opportunity to provide practical insights and recommendations to a selected real world financial services industry issue. This year's topic focused on the use of social media.

“In their project, Josh and Alison identified the ways social media can be used to develop long-term client relationships within the financial services industry,” says Dr. Devrim Yaman, associate professor of finance. “With this award they have demonstrated that they can use what they learn in class to solve real world issues. Josh and Alison make a great team and they are willing to take initiative. It was through their creativity and hard work that this interdisciplinary team earned this prestigious award.”

Huey says she learned a great deal about the financial services industry through the experience. “We did an analysis of social media and how it benefits financial service professionals through maintaining long-term relationships with their clients, which is so vital to their business,” says Huey. “However, social media has been a difficult process to utilize within the financial services industry due to many regulations and restrictions that create barriers. The idea behind our paper and presentation was to inform leading financial services professionals the importance of staying current with technology, while also preserving the personal connections that they have with their customers.”

“The experience of winning the national competition in Phoenix was unparalleled in our academic careers,” says Kallen. “When we first discussed the topic for our paper, we knew we had to try our hardest to make it to the top. Receiving the phone call that

we were finalists was an exciting moment, but even more exciting was the conference and the trip to Phoenix, where we climbed a mountain and enjoyed the weather.”

Colleges and universities actively participate in a variety of ways in the Society of FSP’s University Partners Program (UPP). The Industry Issues Competition represents an excellent way for students to research a timely topic with the opportunity to earn scholarship funds for their schools. The competition centered on a submitted paper judged by a panel of esteemed financial professionals to determine three finalist teams. Finalist teams then made an oral presentation in Phoenix before a panel of judges drawn from attendees at FSP’s prestigious Arizona Institute. Scholarship awards were made to the universities of the finalist teams based on their combined paper and oral presentations.

The WMU team was sponsored by the Southwest Michigan Chapter of the SFSP, making it possible for the students to compete.

Dankies KettleKorn – Pop This!

Albert Allison, a Haworth College of Business MBA student and co-owner of the San Diego-based kettle corn company, Dankies KettleKorn, has a lot on his plate. In addition to taking classes, he is helping his business partner run their company from across the country – all while learning more about how to improve and expand their business through his MBA program.

Dankies is a wholesale and retail kettle corn company that sells products at special events like concerts, festivals and sporting events. The company’s interesting distribution strategy shies away from the traditional brick and mortar store, offering some interesting opportunities to market a food that could easily be classified as a commodity. The business uses one-on-one interaction and relies heavily on this direct feedback to grow the business. Allison admits that not many people can name their favorite brand of kettle corn (except for people in San Diego that is!) but offers this explanation, “Customers are willing to pay for any brand that ties the sugary smell of freshly cooked popcorn to a positive emotional experience. What separates our events from others is that we support the needs and wants of the key decision makers – primarily the people who ask questions about our process and want to know more about how Dankies makes the finest kettle corn.”

Those interactions, along with fresh, handcrafted batches, made with all-American ingredients, have helped Dankies KettleKorn grow from a fun weekend side business to a full-blown business.

As far as running the company, Allison and his business partner split up the duties across the country. Allison focuses on bookkeeping and payroll while his partner runs day-to-day operations in San Diego. Does this pose some challenges? Sure. But the two understand the importance of continuous education, and Allison is truly enjoying his time at the Haworth College of Business.

“Coming to WMU, I have had the pleasure of networking with students and faculty involved in the sales and business marketing industry as well as the consumer package goods industry. It has been a fantastic experience to see the passion and brilliance of people dedicated to career paths that I have always considered the heart and soul of the Dankies KettleKorn operation.”

In terms of “success,” Allison tries to redefine the word for himself and his employees. He reminds them that running a business is about more than just profits; it is about the intrinsic reward of achieving more through personal and professional growth. “People can achieve that success only when they are confident in their company’s triple bottom line, economic, social and environmental areas,” says Allison.

Starting a new business can be extremely intimidating, but he encourages others to blaze their own trails and learn through experience, noting that there is not always a clear cut path to reach the desired business result and sometimes that means writing your own rules.

“When all else fails, just do it,” Allison states. “There may not be a perfect opportunity for someone to start a business, but you’ll never know if you don’t try. My business partner and I were looking for ways to make money on the weekends. It started as a fun side business and has grown beyond our greatest imaginations with hard work and focus on slow and steady growth.”

Bronco Alert: Albert Allison is a second generation Bronco. His father, Albert Allison, BBA ’71, MBA ’77, is active with the College of Business and with WMU.

WMU Teams earn over \$30,000 in winnings in statewide Clean Energy Venture Challenge

Five teams of Western Michigan University students have won over \$30,000 in micro grants and category awards in the Michigan Clean Energy Venture Challenge at the statewide competition in Ann Arbor, Mich., on Friday, February 17.

The Challenge encourages students from Michigan colleges and universities to grow clean-energy solutions into thriving businesses. There were 16 student teams competing in the event. In addition to WMU, students represented the following universities: Lake Superior State University, Michigan State University, Michigan Technological University, the University of Michigan and Wayne State University.

“This has been a beta year for WMU student participation in entrepreneur competitions,” says Barclay Johnson, instructor of management, and mentor to a number of the student teams participating in the event. “With the proper training, we have proven that our students can play in prime time against the tough schools. In this contest, we competed against teams that were mostly MBA, LAW and Ph.D students from the other schools. This has also been a great cooperative experience with U of M and the U of M faculty.”

“It feels great to win and be among 16 other teams competing for the same thing,” says Andrea Lavasseur, who was part of the VermaBioMass team. “We put so much time and energy into this competition and when our names were called, along with other teams representing WMU, it was a great feeling. We would like to thank WMU for the opportunity as well as the special opportunity to represent the Haworth College of Business. Go Broncos!”

A team of Wayne State University graduate students won the \$50,000 first place prize in the competition. In addition to a first- and second-place prize at the contest, judges gave out awards in six categories, including best resource conservation, increased energy efficiency and green building. Five special achievement awards were also awarded for best prototype, most disruptive, best team assembled, best pivot(s) and judges’ choice.

All five WMU teams shared in the winnings and are listed below:

Category Prizes

Advances in Building Techniques and Materials, Green Building

Glass Reclamation – \$5,000 plus \$2,000 in micro grants

Glass Reclamation is recycling glass in a specialty class that is not currently recycled or pulverized. The product and the byproduct is used in concrete to build buildings that are Leed certified. Team members are Samantha Marsh, Nicole Clement, Kate Lutz, Drew Williams, Dan Duzenberry and Rachel Plaster.

Resource Conservation

e1e2 (earth first, everything else second) – \$5,000, plus \$2,000 in micro grants

e1e2 is a recycling program that awards members with points for recycling. The

members can use their recycling points as discounts or coupons for products and services within their local community, online and at national retailers. Founded in March, 2011 in Kalamazoo by Samuel Jaquette at StartUp Weekend, e1e2 has been making a difference in Michigan's environment. Team members are: Samuel Jaquette, WMU alumnus; Aaron Holmes, KVCC; Adam Parr, Northwood University alumnus; and WMU students Abdullah Alyousif, Katrisha Johnson, Nathon Johnson and Duy Nguyen.

Most Disruptive Product

Revolutionary Winds – \$2,500, plus \$2,500 in micro grants (Tied for first place in this category)

Revolutionary Winds is developing a vertical wind turbine that can be easily refitted on any existing pole structure, thus eliminating the need for new poles, and the ability to be off grid and on grid generation of electricity. Team members are Neil Hurley and Matthew Olsen.

Special Achievement Prizes

Best Team Assembled

VermaBioMass – \$5,000, plus \$2,000 in micro grants

VermaBioMass is focusing on the usage of a specific type of worms to break down biodegradable material from healthcare facilities that is not currently recycled. Team members are Lindsey Truit, Andrea LaVasseur and Brian Oswald.

Best pivot(s)

ReClaim – \$5,000, plus \$2,000 in micro grants

ReClaim is developing new technology for using existing heat exhaust to create electricity backup systems. Team members are Aaron Tardy, Sergio Cappelletti and Olivia Starks.

This year, for the first time, the competition was part of a national effort encouraging young entrepreneurs to develop greener energy solutions through President Barack Obama's Startup America campaign. The winner of the Michigan contest advances to a regional competition in the spring, and could eventually have a shot at a national grand prize in Washington, D.C. this summer.

Clean Energy Venture Challenge sponsors include DTE Energy, MASCO Corp. Foundation, The Kresge Foundation, U.S. Department of Energy, Google, UBS Investment Bank, Eisbrenner Public Relations, the University of Michigan, Western Michigan University, Wayne State University, Michigan State University and Michigan Technological University. Partners include the University of Michigan's Ross Energy Club, Energy Institute, Center for Entrepreneurship and MPowered.

About the Clean Energy Venture Challenge

The Michigan Clean Energy Venture Challenge is a state-wide competition administered by the Center for Entrepreneurship at the University of Michigan. It is a new version of the Michigan Clean Energy Prize that provides student teams interested in clean energy entrepreneurship the education, mentorship and resources to accelerate their ideas forward. Teams that are accepted into the program will be part of a cohort of clean energy entrepreneurs from across the state of Michigan. In addition to experience, connections and feedback they will receive, there are also opportunities for micro grants and other prizes totaling more than \$100,000.

For more information:

Michigan Clean Energy Venture Challenge: <http://micevc.com/>

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