

Are Celebrities Worth the Big Bucks? Only the Right Ones



Have you ever wondered if it's worth the enormous expense to hire a top celebrity to host your infomercial — or perhaps even worth it just to appear in your show as a testimonial? Can it really make that big of difference in the overall success of the campaign?

There has been much debate about this topic throughout the years and, to be honest, we have been wishy-washy with our own opinions on the matter. Not anymore! After doing a little research, we are putting a stake in the ground and saying that having the right celebrity in your infomercial can make a huge difference.

The key word here is *right*. As a matter of fact, the right celebrity can increase the response to your infomercial by up to 50 percent. Conversely, using the wrong celebrity — or using a celebrity in the wrong way — can actually hurt your response and end up costing you a lot more than just the upfront fee you had to pay.

For example, it can be pointless to hire a celebrity as a testimonial if the celebrity isn't willing to show the dramatic before-and-after results from using the product. Whether it is acne or fitness, it is important to show the celebrities' true before-and-after results.

So how do you know how to pick the right celebrity? It's not an exact science for infomercials, but a celebrity's overall Q rating is very important. The Q rating system was developed in the 1960s and is widely used and coveted by marketers and advertisers as the best way of picking the right celebrity for a particular brand.

For instance, you may not think a particular celebrity would be right for your show, but his or her Q rating may say otherwise. Another key consideration is the Q rating from the particular demographic you are trying to target. If you are trying to market to a very broad market, a celebrity that appeals to the masses is probably fine. But, if you're targeting a niche like skateboarders, then Tony Hawk — the most popular name in skateboarding — would be even more of a fit.

Here's the bottom line: in a business that is laden with risk, adding the right celebrity can dramatically reduce those risks and turn a mediocre campaign into a box-office hit. Think about it. Guthy-Renker doesn't just use celebrities because it can afford to. It uses celebrities because the right ones help Guthy-Renker be able to afford to continue using celebrities.

If you are raising money to do a show, go the extra mile: pony up the money to hire the right celebrity. ■

Take 2 Direct specializes in providing uniquely creative and highly responsive commercials and campaign management. If you want to sell your product and need a company that has the creative vision to drive the call, as well as the practical experience to manage the intricate back-end process, contact Take 2 Direct CEO Adam MacDonald at (714) 979-5555 or E-mail him at adam@take2direct.com.

