

By Jordan Pine

Newspapers have movie critics, and now *Response* has a DRTV critic.

One big difference: I'm a practitioner, so my opinions have been put to the test. Indeed, the checklist I use to evaluate DRTV campaigns is based on timeless rules for DRTV success. I call my particular version the SciMark Seven (S7), and you can read more about it in the sidebar to this column.

If you're familiar with my work, welcome to The SciMark Report in print!

This will be a regular report in the research pages of *Response*, and the reviews printed here will be exclusive to this magazine.

If you don't know me or the DRTV reviews I've been writing for the past three years, I encourage you to visit scimark.blogspot.com. You'll find everything you need to know there, including a searchable archive of past reviews.

One last thing: my E-mail address is jordan@scimark.com. I welcome your comments, whether positive or negative. Let the fun begin!

MIGHTY FIXIT

Description: Mighty Tape, repositioned

Main Pitch: "Not tape, but a flexible silicone wrap that creates an airtight, watertight seal in seconds."

Main Offer: Two rolls for \$19.99

Bonus: Triple the offer (six rolls total)

Starring: Anthony Sullivan

Marketer: Media Enterprises/Plymouth Direct

Producer: Hutton-Miller

Website: www.MightyFixit.com

S7 Score: 6 out of 7 ★★★★★☆



Mighty Tape was the late, great Billy Mays' final commercial. This is a re-launch of the product starring his "Pitchmen" co-star, Anthony Sullivan. No disrespect to my departed friend, but this is a better commercial all around. The demos have gone from decent to excellent, the pitch is more refined and the name/positioning of the product has improved greatly. Kudos to John Miller, Peter Hutton and Sully. If this campaign fails, it won't be for lack of effort or talent.

Of course, what you say about a product and what people perceive are two different things. I've been down this road before. Finishing Touch wasn't a hair trimmer. No, it was a *hair remover*. But the trade press looked at it and declared it a "mini-trimmer." I'm sure consumers had the same reaction. Our human need to categorize things is powerful (it's what drives stereotypes), and it overrides even the best attempts by clever marketers. I think people will look at this "non-tape" and immediately think "tape."

That's why I have to give this campaign the same S7 Score I gave the last campaign. I never underestimate the Mighty brand, but I think people will see this and think: What can this really do that electrical tape cannot? And how likely am I to need it for that purpose? Put another way, I just can't see how it's *needed* enough to generate that critical impulse to buy.

SPEED SLICER

Description: A mandolin-style slicer

Main Pitch: "Slice, julienne and chop at lightning-fast speed."

Main Offer: \$19.95 for the slicer with Handy Grip and Handy Hopper

Bonus: Small container with Fresh Keep Lid

Starring: Chef Tony

Marketer: Allstar Marketing

Producer: Opfer Communications

Website: www.SpeedSlicer.com

S7 Score: 4 out of 7 ★★★★★☆☆



Is another slicer/dicer *needed* at this point in time? I don't think so. Many have tried, and many have failed. Chop House, Triple Chopper, Happy Chop, One Touch Slicer, Quick Chop — the list goes on. By now, the perception must be that this category is *crowded* with solutions even though only a handful have made it onto the shelf (e.g., Vince Offer's Slap Chop). This item has also been tried before as the Vidalia Slice Wizard (starring Billy Mays), so it isn't really *different*. It didn't work then (despite the mega-success of Chop Wizard), and it's unlikely to work now.

TOTAL VIEW

Description: A small spot mirror that sticks onto a car's side-view mirror

Main Pitch: "The amazing mirror that eliminates blind spots."

Main Offer: Three for \$10 (two for the side-views, one for the rearview)

Bonus: A pair of Total View HD Sunglasses

Marketer: Ontel Products

Producer: Hutton-Miller

Website: www.BuyTotalView.com



S7 Score: 6 out of 7 ★★★★★☆

Stick-on mirrors that eliminate blind spots have been sold at automotive stores for decades. We always used them in my family growing up. It's possible we were cutting edge and the rest of America hasn't heard of these handy add-ons ... but I doubt it. A quick online search finds Ace Hardware has these for as little as \$2.50. That means this product doesn't have a quality critical for DRTV success: It isn't *different* enough to motivate people off the couch. There's a reason why the phrase "not available in stores" has become synonymous with As Seen on TV commercials. If people feel they can just pick something up at their local retailer, they won't bother to "order now."



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