

Copywriters Can Dance

Keep putting your message in front of your target audience - do it in the right way, and you'll gain acceptance.

Can you remember an old Phil Collins number – I can dance? I could never really understand what he was going on about. So he could dance – so what? The point is, I can remember the song. I don't particularly like Phil Collins' music; I never liked the music of Genesis, (I was, and still am a big Yes fan – anyone who knows the two bands will probably understand where I'm coming from). But yet I still remember the song – I can dance.

Why should that be? Well, two main reasons. The first is more particular to me as an individual, the second is actually an age old marketing theory.

So firstly – I never liked dancing. I can shuffle around in time to music, but if I really like the music that's playing, the chances are I want to listen to it, and the most action required on my behalf is to headbang if it happens to be heavy rock (a particular penchant). The only film I ever walked out on was West Side Story – I just got fed up with street gangs expressing themselves in dance. There are only two reasons why I ventured forth on to a dance floor – girls and social compliance. Girls is a straightforward reason – dancing is a great way to get close to a girl you fancy. It works very well as a youth, has done for years, will do for years. As an older man though, I am seriously contemplating taking dancing lessons. Shuffling around to the "You dancing"; "you asking" routine is a little embarrassing. Asking a woman to dance to a waltz or quickstep seems much more genteel and befitting somehow – so learning the required movements would seem to be advantageous, however much I can't stand Strictly Come Dancing. The other reason for setting forth on to the shiny floor is mere social acquiescence. Constantly complaining at company do's that you cannot see the point of shuffling around in a haze of alcohol does nothing for team bonding. Far better to bite your lip and just get on with it – though I do secretly wonder how many other men (for it is a male malaise) are feeling the same way.

Second reason for remembering the old Phil Collins' number is the history of the idea of how prestigious dancing is. Years before I remember another old song – "Do you love me?" Basically, the poor singer was being overlooked in the romantic department because he was a bit of a failure on the dance floor. The following line after "Do you love me?" was "Now that I can Dance – watch me now!" Modern man has transformed from the hunter / gatherer / provider to the ape on two legs who can gyrate in front of an audience. How we have progressed. And if you think about it, there are many more examples of songs along this theme. So when Mr Collins sings about how he can dance, we already understand what he means, and why it is important to him.

And that is the essence of this particular theory of marketing. Getting a message across to an audience once gets a certain recognition. Repeating the message to the same audience several times gains a certain acceptance – and that is the holy grail. It allies the product with the

product provider. In exceptional circumstances, this is so accepted that the product provider becomes part of the language – Hoover is a brand, but also a verb. How this message is put across to the audience is down to the strategy of the marketer, but integrated marketing is key.

The culmination of this is probably the new discipline of sonic marketing - but that's another article.