

## From the Lab

### The Anatomy of a Marathon DRTV Hit

Have you ever wondered why, oftentimes, five of the top 10 infomercials have been on the air for years? What is it that not only got them there *but also* keeps them there? This month, TEST Marketing looks at the commonalities among the highest-ranking, longest running shows to see if it can pinpoint that "marathon magic."

Following are the longest running long-form DRTV shows that rank among the top 20 on the Infomercial Monitoring Service (IMS) report, as of Aug. 8:

Show	No. of weeks	No. of years
Carleton Sheets	550	10.6
Attacking Anxiety	545	10.5
Proactiv Solution	360	6.9
Total Gym	342	6.6
Bowflex	326	6.3
RONCO Showtime Rotisserie	257	4.9
Sharper Image	232	4.5
Gazelle Freestyle	126	2.4
FoodSaver Vac	116	2.2

"From the Lab" has been appearing in *Response* for nearly two years now. Have you ever read something in "From the Lab" that you wanted to comment on or explore further? Or, has it ever brought up questions that you would like to have answered? Let us know and TEST Marketing can address it in an upcoming issue. Direct your questions and comments to Thomas Haire, editor-in-chief, at: [thaire@advanstar.com](mailto:thaire@advanstar.com)

#### Commonalities

All or many of these shows include at least a few of the following attributes:

- Low-entry price point with a two-step selling process
- High-priced (most are \$100 or over)
- Strong continuity potential and/or extensive back-end marketing
- Intellectual properties that have unique personalities attached to them and a low cost of goods
- Star power or unique personalities representing or pitching the product
- High-end look to the production with a stylized branding theme
- Shows/products are not "knock-offable"
- Hardly any are at retail

Following are three of the longest running short-form DR spots that currently rank in the top five on the IMS report, as of Aug. 8:

Show	Rank	Category
Leptoprin	1	Weight-loss
Smoke Away	2	Stop-smoking
Bowflex Six-Week Challenge	5	Fitness

#### Commonalities

These offers each include at least two of the following attributes:

- High price point
- Lead-generation ability
- Strong continuity potential and/or extensive back-end marketing
- A lower price point (\$29 or less)
- Easily knocked off
- Rapid category saturation
- Goes to retail and burns TV life-span out very quickly

#### Successful but short-lived

When you look at those campaigns whose time was bright but short, the commonalities tend to oppose those associated with the longest-running shows. Think of big hits that fizzle quickly, such as a pasta pot or a kitchen gadget, and you'll usually find:



Founded by Adam MacDonald, TEST Marketing Group gives direct response marketers an edge by combining in-depth knowledge and "big picture" DR experience to provide uniquely creative and practical input in developing a successful DR campaign. TEST also provides help selecting the right inbound and outbound telemarketing, fulfillment, media and manufacturing vendors for their clients' specific needs. For the latest trends in creative direct response marketing, call (714) 546-5555 and ask for Adam MacDonald, CEO, at ext. 202 or E-mail [adam@testmg.com](mailto:adam@testmg.com).