

Monthly Musings



courtesy of Fletcher Consulting

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NOT-SO-

SMART

MOVE:

Peloton Controversy

Timing is everything, as proven by the marketers of Peloton, the \$2,400 exercise bicycle. [Their commercial](#) that features a man giving the exercise bike to his already fit wife has caught what I call the latest internet rage.

This is an issue that would very likely not have been a thought two years ago, but in our easy-to-offend culture, marketers need to beware.

Interestingly enough, much of the video could have been repurposed with a different message. [Imagine the tug of the heartstrings if the man had said, "I'm giving you and me this Peloton so you... AND I... can be healthier and be around when our little daughter has children of her own."](#)

There's no way that message would have been considered insensitive by today's politically correct police because it:

- Shows the exercise is beneficial for the man as much as the woman
- Recognizes a future goal of fitness
- Creates a vision of the little girl growing up and having her own family

In the words of the 2008 "Get Smart" movie (based on the 1960s TV series): *Missed it by THIS much!*

Today's marketers have a different set of challenges, which include:

- Captivate the reader/viewer's/listener's active attention within the first 3-5 seconds
- Motivate the audience to crave the product or service
- Create an emotional connection for the audience with the product or service
- (And this is new in our present age) Consider how the message, visuals and audio might possibly offend anyone and then make revisions that can make the overall presentation compelling to your audience

With all the hyper-targeting that digital channels now provide so that an ad can be tightly aimed at a niche market, social media

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allows someone outside that niche to casually run into the ad – often by a social media posting that might be even praising the creativity – and become offended.

Message to marketers: Be on your toes with every aspect of your messaging – particularly if you're using humor, which is both memorable AND risky – so your advertising and promotional efforts are the best possible reflection on your brand.

By the way, don't feel sorry for the actress who appeared in the Peloton commercial. Actor Ryan Reynolds cast her in a new commercial for his product, Aviation Gin.



NOT-SO-FAST

Tesla's "Shatter-proof" Windows... Shatter

Tesla CEO Elon Musk must have wanted to hide. He rolled out his new concept "Cybertruck" that allegedly features bulletproof windows. Unfortunately, each of the side windows immediately shattered when hit with a metal ball during the media event.

How **EMBARRASSING!**

Proving the public relations theory that "A crisis is a terrible thing to waste," toy company Lego could not resist [taking a jab at Tesla](#) with Lego's own version of a guaranteed shatter-proofed Lego!

This is a living lesson to people preparing to demonstrate a product in a major news

event: Test it completely, even more rigorously than what you are promising and beyond anything that could possibly go wrong.

Watch that video again and notice that the guy throwing the ball was not exactly bringing the heat!



NOT-SO-SMART DECISION:

I Killed Dairy Queen

You may have read that six area Dairy Queen restaurants closed last week, and you very likely wondered what happened. I'm embarrassed to admit that I may have been the reason. It could have been totally my fault.

When you [read my story in this week's Fort Worth Business Press](#), you will understand the havoc I created.



Read and learn the three-step program I have proposed if Dairy Queen will re-open these locations. Texas needs DQ!

SMART TIMING:

Christmas Season Promotion

It IS truly **the most wonderful time of the year** for feel-good marketing and clever promotions. As you see from the photo below, I was delighted to find some of my favorite snacks in the grocery aisle from Hostess – Snoballs in a box of single-packs, Holiday Cupcakes and Mint Chocolate Twinkies.

Here are some of this Christmas season's most fun promotions:

- **British tech retailer GAME** has released its 7th annual Christmas "Tinner" in a can – designed for hardcore gamers who might be spending their entire Christmas playing games online and may not want to leave their chairs. The can of three-in-one Christmas dinners includes layered turkey, potatoes, broccoli, bread sauce, sprouts, stuffing and mince pies.
- **KFC Fire logs** provide the decadent taste of Kentucky Fried Chicken's 11 herbs and spices. These five-pound logs sold out in just a few hours last year, so KFC has ordered a much larger inventory that is selling at Walmart stores and at Walmart.com. Despite the aroma, the logs are NOT for eating!
- **Burger King** has launched a new Christmas holiday game: Winter Whopperland Instant Win Game & Sweepstakes. Throughout the Christmas season, BK fries and drinks come with a peel-off sticker. You could win one of 50,000 non-food instant prizes, a trip to Costa Rica, a Jeep Renegade, free Whoppers for a year and other prizes.



Popeyes Chicken created ugly Christmas sweaters that sold out nearly as fast as their chicken sandwich launch. The colorful orange and white-striped bundle of warmth is a result of Popeyes' partnership with [UglyChristmasSweater.com](#) to [create this new](#)

[design](#) that's sure to be a hit at Christmas parties.

TV Commercials of the Christmas Season:

Here are a few of my favorites. Each one embodies a touch of Disney, who said, "Emotions trump everything!"

- **Oreo** – Santa's newest elf stocks up on Oreos for the big guy!
- **Microsoft** – A little girl decides that Microsoft's language translation will help her visit with reindeer.
- **Amazon** – Packages sing along with customers. This commercial has pretty much everything except a puppy.
- **GMC** Denali Pick-Up Truck – Has it all, with snow, a puppy and a truck
- **Chewy's** – Not only has puppies, but also FEATURES puppies – with Santa!

If you enjoy memories of late celebrities, you will love Elizabeth Taylor's [commercial](#) for her fragrances and Jimmy Dean's holiday [commercial](#) for Jimmy Dean's Sausage.

Unfortunately, we won't be able to hear one of the most desired Christmas albums that Paul McCartney has produced. While we are all familiar with his 1979 hit, "[Wonderful Christmastime](#)," Sir Paul has produced an entire album of his Christmas favorites. Sadly, he has kept it "just for the family," so unless you're related to him, you won't hear his version of Christmas faves.

By the way, it's just fine to wish others "Merry Christmas." We can all be tempted to run scared of being politically correct, but December 25 is not "Holiday." It's Christmas day. And I prefer to take it even a step further – Jesus is the reason for the season.

Merry Christmas!

THE Tiebreaker

Waffle House Christmas Tradition

Every family enjoys some sort of Christmas tradition, whether opening one gift on Christmas Eve, a unique family food item on the Christmas lunch table, or even a treat of eggnog for everyone.



My Christmas morning treat is a visit to Waffle House, where I simply absorb the atmosphere with the locals who may have worked all night long at AT&T Stadium or cleaned up a store to prepare for the Post-Christmas sale.

For several years, I have sought out a server who seems to be having a tough day and sit in her booth, and then give a tip worth at least double the price of the meal. This past year, God revealed something even better: Not only tip the waitress, but also slide some Christmas cash to the team working the grill because they don't receive any tips.

Rebecca and I, along with Snowball (the three-legged kitten), Doc (the funky, spunky Morkie) and Curly (Rebecca's three-year-old cat), wish to you and yours a very Merry Christmas!

