



2007 Gold Effie Winner

TLC “Life Lessons”

Category: **Media Companies**
Lead Agency: **The Martin Agency**
Media Agency: **PHD**
Contributing Agency: **Crew Creative Agency**
Client: **The Learning Channel**

Strategic Challenge

Reinvent a network who had lost its identity:

TLC was experiencing a bit of a midlife crisis. No longer the young network that launched *Trading Spaces* and kicked off the DIY craze, TLC hadn't been able to replicate that success. Despite pioneering the DIY genre, the format was quickly copied by dozens of other networks and TLC lost both viewers and identity. Ratings inevitably began to slump. TLC needed a unique and relevant brand positioning to put them back in the viewers consideration set. And learning a valuable lesson from *Trading Spaces*: the new positioning had to be more than just new television shows.

Objectives:

- Increase overall awareness.
- Redefine TLC in the marketplace and create affinity among its viewers and ad buyers.
- Deepen the viewer experience ignite a dialogue with the Slambrosia audience
- Turn around network ratings slump.
- Successfully launch new show: ***Honey we're killing the kids*** with a .8 rating.

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The Big Idea

Reaching out to those who had outgrown the antics of MTV, but weren't quite ready to retire to A&E, our research revealed that TLC's target was at a point in life where they're experiencing many "firsts": first home, first child, first time feeling like a grown up. In collaboration with the Client, we dubbed this lifestage **Slambrosia**, which is a time in your life when you are bombarded with new experiences (SLAM) that are challenging, yet extremely sweet and rewarding (AMBROSIA) While this group was desperate for guidance through this lifestage of "firsts", it became clear that when it comes to learning, they're looking for a partner, not another parent. TLC recognized that in order to resonate with this audience, we had to speak to their lifestage, not their age range. Our challenge was clear: Help them learn valuable lessons utilizing TLC's "learning" equity in a fresh new way. ***TLC's is the network that shares life's lessons with you.***

Bringing the Idea to Life

Life Lessons. Collect them all.

Hummel figurines were a great way to offer a physical representation of the life lessons we've all collected along the way. We're not talking about your grandmother's picture perfect statuettes. Our target audience needed their own collectibles – figurines that accurately represented the true-life lessons you experience as you travel through your 30'- as awkward, real and hilarious as they may be. Our figurines depicted realistic situations (ie. Husband and Wife arguing not a Husband giving his wife a rose.), we shared valuable lessons acquired during "Slambrosia milestones": parenting, career, families, spirituality, home ownership and relationships and of course they were humorous.

Taking the Road Less Traveled:

In order to breakaway from traditional category conventions and speak to Slambrosians in a unique way, we first had to understand what **not** to do. We studied the competition's advertising intensely and watched a very predictable equation emerge.

- The stars of the shows are always the heroes.
- Network branding comes in the form of a network logo with the show's date/time stamp.
- Almost all network advertising ends with an overpromising call to action such as "Brace yourself for a killer season."

To stand out from this sea of sameness, we developed three guiding principles:

- **Avoid the existing formulas at all costs.** Be more conceptual and more interesting.
- **Include viewers in the equation.** Always answer their most pressing question, "What's in it for me?"
- **Make people laugh.** We are here to entertain our viewers.

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The fully-integrated campaign included:

- TV
- On-air experience
- Cinema
- Print : Consumer and Trade
- Newspaper - Consumer
- Out of Home – Taxi tops, City panels, Bus Shelters, Phone Kiosks
- In-store - Chinese containers, Pizza boxes, Shopping cart cards, Take ones/Recipe
- Taxi receipt
- Cinema posters/standees
- Experiential Marketing
- Internet
- E-cards
- Direct Mail – Trade
- Commerce – Figurines Sold online

Results

The campaign broke in March and the results have been very positive. The creative work is being recognized among industry critics - the TLC sports held the top four positions on adcritic.com during the launch week and has recently been awarded a Gold Jay Chiat Award for Strategic Excellence. The campaign is already successfully driving viewers to two new primetime shows, and shifting brand perceptions among TLC's target, igniting a relevant and powerful dialogue.

Objective:

Increase overall awareness

***Results:**

Ad Awareness is up 733%, taking TLC from fifth to first among their top six competitors.

Tagline recall grew 300% in eight weeks

Objective:

Redefine TLC in the marketplace and create affinity among its viewers and ad buyers.

***Results:**

TLC rating "excellent/very good" grew from 53% to 65% (+23%)

"TLC has a sense of humor" increased 32%

"TLC is a channel I would seek out" increased 37%

Objective:

Deepen the viewer experience ignite a dialogue with the Slambrosian audience.

Estimated website hits for 2006 based off 2005 hits = 70,000,000 hits (May – Sept)

***Results:**

Exceeded web hit goals by 50% (70,000,000 vs 141,000,000)

6,000 figurines purchased online (\$14.95)

8,000 Life lessons shared on Myspace.com

"TLC is emotionally involving" increased 29%

Interest in watching TLC increased 26%

Objective:

Turn around network ratings slump.

***Results:**

Seven uninterrupted months of ratings growth. (See chart)

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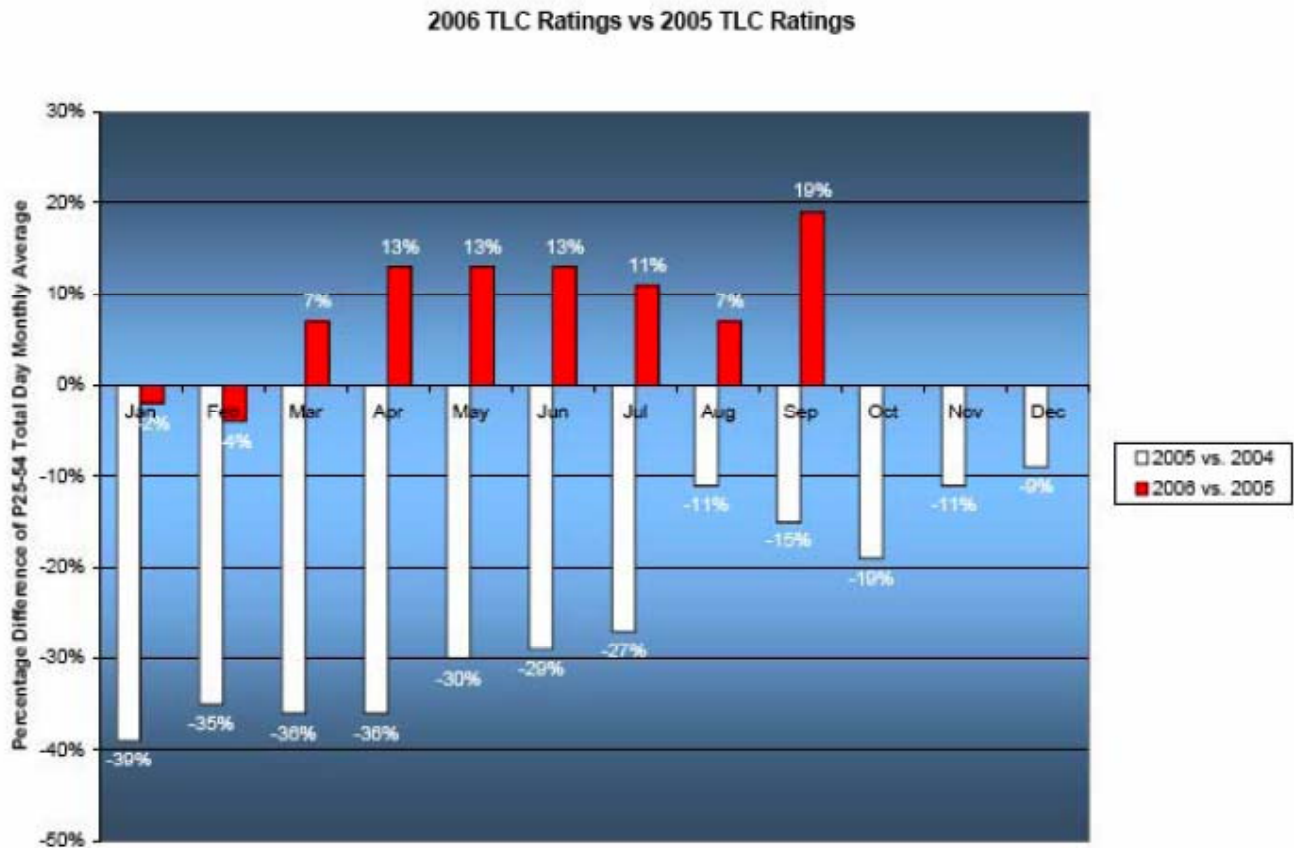
Objective:

Successfully launch new show: **Honey we're killing the kids** with a .8 rating.

***Results:**

Ratings Received: **Honey we're killing the kids** = 1.0

(*Source: Independent tracking study (Latitude Research), Ratings from US network research and The Learning Channel)



Budget: \$20 million and over

Campaign Reach: National

Media Channels: TV, Newspaper, Trade/Professional, Consumer Magazine, Direct Mail, OOH, Interactive/Online, Commerce – Saleable Figurines Online

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