

Alive & Well in the C-Suite

Ernst & Young extends its iconic advertising campaign online and connects with its elusive, c-suite audience.

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Most people seem to believe that web surfers ignore online advertising. This should come as no surprise, as banner ads were pronounced dead years ago. And yet, like the old Monty Python gag, banner ads seem to be saying “I’m not dead!”

In fact, they appear to be quite healthy, even thriving. Forrester Research projects that online will account for eight percent of all ad spending by 2010—rivaling cable/satellite TV and radio. Forrester also reports that half of all marketers plan to increase online spending by decreasing spending in other channels.

Why is this happening? Do online ads work? Well, online is definitely working for Ernst & Young. The professional services giant has found online to be quite effective at reaching and engaging its elusive target audience of c-suite *Fortune* 1000 executives.

It is surprising to learn that c-suite executives actually are heavy internet users and have come to rely on the internet as their primary source of business information. According to MRI, virtually all senior-level executives are online, and

Forbes reports that most c-suite executives consider the internet to be their primary source of business information.

In addition, more than half of all c-suite executives say they go online before starting work each day, according to a GartnerG2 and *Forbes.com* survey. Finally—and perhaps most compelling of all—c-suite executives believe that the internet is the best way to advertise to people like themselves, as reported by *NYTimes.com* via a study conducted by Nielsen/NetRatings.

Accordingly, GlobalWorks, as E&Y’s online agency, developed and executed a series of online advertising campaigns to elevate the profile of E&Y’s business advisory services among the *Fortune* 1000 c-suite across a wide range of industries, including banking, pharmaceutical, automotive, oil & gas, and transaction advisory services.

The campaign helps communicate Ernst & Young’s message in a fresh, witty, intelligent and exciting way. Each ad is executed in Ernst & Young’s distinctive “icon campaign”—characterized by bold imagery and telegraphic text. This animated iconographic approach is quite

Close

Test your **Auto IQ.**



A new car hits the market. How much did it cost to provide healthcare for the employees who produced it?*

- A. \$800
- B. \$1,000
- C. \$200
- D. \$400



*In the U.S., on average, for current and retired employees

distinctive and rather unconventional in the professional services category, helping Ernst & Young to break through the clutter online.

The ads proved very effective in driving c-suite executives to Ernst & Young's website; indeed, click-through rates are ranging as high as 6.89% percent.

Those who clicked through were rewarded with relevant, thought-leadership content covering hot topics, such as "Making Confident Decisions," "Understanding Foreign Markets," and "Minimizing Risk." At the same time, the executives were invited to learn more about Ernst & Young's business advisory services.

The firm found that its target audience is often surprised to learn that the firm is more than "just an auditor"—that it can help monitor a pharmaceutical company's distribution network to stop counterfeit drugs, or assist an automotive company enter overseas markets by offering native insight into business and cultural practices.

In other words, it is newsworthy to c-suite executives that the firm offers such a wide range of professional services and they appreciated the information.

Perhaps surprisingly, Ernst & Young is even finding that animated quizzes are also effective at engaging c-suite executives to interact and learn. In fact, interaction rates for quiz-based banner ads are in the 5-6 percent range—proving once again c-suite willingness to engage and interact with highly relevant online messages.

Above and beyond the strong click-through and the interaction rates, the online advertising is also working to build Ernst & Young's "brand awareness" by extending its iconic image advertising campaign to the web—and, as such, directly to the desktops of its c-Suite audience.



So, when it comes to online advertising, don't call the coroner. It seems the old Monty Python gag rings true after all!

Mortician: Bring out your dead! Bring out your dead!

Customer: Here's one—nine pence.

Mortician: What?

Customer: Nothing—here's your nine pence.

Mortician: Here—he says he's not dead!

Customer: Yes, he is.

Dead Person: I'm not!

Mortician: He isn't.

Customer: Well, he will be soon, he's very ill.

Dead Person: I'm getting better!

Customer: No, you're not—you'll be stone dead in a moment.

Mortician: Oh, I can't take him like that—it's against regulations.

Dead Person: I don't want to go on the cart!

Customer: Oh, don't be such a baby.

Mortician: I can't take him...

Dead Person: I feel fine! I think I'll go for a walk. I feel happy...I feel happy.

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To view demos of Ernst & Young's online campaign, please play the mini-CD enclosed with this issue of The Hub, or visit globalworks.com/ey ■

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