

The DRTV Times

TV ADVERTISING THAT PAYS!



Concept Media
Infomercials from script to SCREEN

Volume 8, 8/22/00 2255 Glades Rd., Ste. 324 Atrium, Boca Raton, FL 33431 888.326.DRTV www.concept-media.com

ERA TO CELEBRATE 10TH ANNIVERSARY AT SEPTEMBER LAS VEGAS EXPO "ACCESS 2000"

By Edward Easton

The Electronic Retailing Association (ERA) will be celebrating an incredible past decade of growth the weekend of September 10th-12th at the fabulous Venetian Hotel in Las Vegas.

The combination Trade show and Expo will feature a plethora of new inventions, products, and services from all around the nation. All of these will be featured over the coming months and years of the new millennium in the DRTV format and other electronic media.

A veritable host of inventors and entrepreneurs will be on hand to demonstrate innovative wares in the *New Products Pavilion*. These kinds of products and DRTV infomercials fit hand in glove, complementing one another like no other marketing strategy.

The expo will be capped by an Awards Gala that will rival the "Oscars", as stars and outstanding achievers in the industry are chosen by Blue Ribbon panels made up of previously recognized industry professionals. This annual Gala has long been deemed the Academy Awards of Electronic Retailing.

Celebrity on-air talents like *Jennilee Harrison*, a former prime-time series star-turned spokesperson and host for infomercials promoting *Ab-Slide*, *Power Gym*, and *Solar Hair* will be honored, along with other celebrity spokes people. Under an umbrella of three

groupings is a cornucopia of sub categories. Group II is the largest with 17 categories.

A chosen panel judge for two of these, "*Best Infomercial Producer*" and "*Best Infomercial Production under 150K*" is Concept Media's own Ron Perlstein, the company's executive producer.

Perlstein has his own slate of successes under the ERA umbrella and feels honored to participate. "It will be especially gratifying to see a lot of my old friends in the business-people that I've worked with before, and will no doubt work with again." He says.

The Internet and new technologies like Broadband and Convergence are exceptionally hot right now in the Direct Response (DR) industry, and companies that specialize in those will be setting up exhibits and demos in the Winterberry Group's Internet Technology Group Pavilion. The theme of this event will be "Next Generation DRTV" and its focus on bringing the DRTV and worldwide web communities together.

It's been over fifty years since Bugsy Siegel stopped at a lonely, isolated and rundown roadhouse in the middle of the desert and decided to invent a new town. He called it Las Vegas. It may have been seeded with mob money, but now it's all legit and a Ft Knox in its own right. The place where people come from around the globe to win and lose fortunes—and have a hell of a time in the process.

If you want to participate in this fabulous event called Access 2000, go to ERA's website at www.retailing.org and register online!

CELEBRITY SPOKESPEOPLE—INSTANT CREDIBILITY

By Edward Easton

Life is not particularly grim for prime-time television stars when their series are cancelled. If their show was a hit and ran its course, they'll likely go into another or make the light-speed jump into the hyperspace of full-blown movie stardom. Even if none of *those* options are in the cards, they'll still get rich from syndication of the old series—or from *infomercials*.

But they don't get rich on upfront fees, which can be quite modest indeed. The typical prospective celebrity spokesman (or woman) is often willing to *gamble*—just like the entrepreneurs who hire them. If their on-air infomercial pitch is successful and the product's sales go ballistic—they stand to make a fortune on the back end. If not, they haven't invested much of their time.

"A celebrity provides instant credibility for the product being promoted, and that is very, very important in a DRTV environment." Says Ron Perlstein, executive producer at Concept Media, "You want that guy at home to stop surfing the channels when he comes to yours, and the celebrity spokesperson is the best way to achieve that. The audience sees a character that they have invited into their homes many times before via prime time or even the daytime soap series route. It's an immediate identification for the product."

The cost-conscious advertiser can often get the hottest stars for an upfront fee of a mere \$10,000. Some stars can command as much as fifty if they're big enough and have no association with a previous product, or if they do, the sales figures for it were phenomenal. The celebrity pitchman is older than radio or television because it's an idea that *works*.

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