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Social Advertising and Radio-Ecological Education as New Principles of Advertising Campaign

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Probably everyone would name commercial interest and high costs as the basic features of advertising campaign.

A budgetary-financed state-owned company, which fulfills government orders, does not need an advertising campaign, as it does not have to look for clients and sales markets. But if for the current social and economic reasons, a state-owned company stops receiving the required budgetary finance, it is facing an increasingly difficult task of attracting attention to its activity. If the Company is involved in hazardous production, there is a risk that it will start polluting the environment, instead of cleaning it. When the government reduced financing *Radon's* activity of radio-ecological monitoring and radioactive waste disposal, the company was confronted with two problems. The first one was to convince the government and parliament in the necessity of keeping the volumes of finance for the disposal of low and intermediate radioactive waste at the same level. The second is as follows: the scientists are well-aware of the danger the public is experiencing due to the fact that radioactive waste is not disposed in full in Central Russia. The control over the disposal of low and intermediate radioactive waste is becoming less strict. Lately, accidents among the civil population showing the lack of any knowledge relating to radiation danger (such as accidental contacts with radioactive objects, living in apartments with an increased radiation background, etc.) have become more frequent.

In 1998 *Radon* decided to conduct the public information campaign in radio-ecology.

The program consists of several key areas, which include close contacts with journalists, primarily with TV reporters, relating to the above-mentioned topic. This approach helped to promote the idea of public radiation safety to TV screens. From July to December 1998, TV clips about radioactive pollution in new residential districts located on former waste grounds and dumps came out on a weekly basis. Thus, the new dwellers became well aware of potential danger and could protect themselves against it. We also gave priority to the stories about an increased radiation background or high concentrations of radon or mercury in children's care centers and schools. We hoped that it would make the parents be more careful in choosing the places where their children had to spend a lot of time. The third popular topic with the reporters was the city markets during radiological checks of products, such as mushrooms, berries, meat, etc.

We have provided the reporters with ample opportunities to visit the facilities and escort emergency and monitoring teams to the sites of accidents. We have had to help to arrange the shooting of similar plots. For example, it took us a long time to receive the permission from the Central Bank and commercial banks to shoot the

radioactive decontamination of radioactive money kept in their vaults. We managed to convince the banks that it would not ruin their image. Quite on the contrary, it would show their social responsibility, as such money quite often goes directly to the public. Similar clips shown by the central TV channels (for example, NTV) attracted attention of foreign TV companies accredited in Moscow, who asked us to help do more shootings.

At first, *Radon* conducted these activities free of charge, as public and journalists were quite interested in them. But we realized that it was not enough. That is why *Radon* decided to conduct the campaign that would include social advertising shows and printing materials for the public. The funds allocated for this purpose are not that small for a budget-financed company.

Four play clips try to solve two tasks: to describe what is radiation and to tell the viewers about the rules of radiation safety for the consumers (radiation in consumer goods). Conducting the campaign we relied on *Radon's* statistical data (those produced by emergency services). We tried to avoid the scientific style and to make the clips funny and even parody-like (especially the talk-show) to attract TV viewers. A Russian crew headed by the young producer Mikhail Segal produced the clips.

The environmental public information TV campaign is unique in Russia. We do not know other Russian companies involved in similar information campaigns addressed to the general public. *Green Peace* information clips on the Russian TV are more likely to advertise the organization itself, instead of presenting the problem.

Since 1999, the clips are aired by the leading Russian TV companies, such as RTR, ORT, NTV, Culture, TV-Center Moscow TV Company. Moreover, the campaign is also conducted in the regions (for example, in Central Russia) through STS, AST and Ren-TV circuit agencies offering the products to be aired by the regional TV-stations. We also suggested that the telephones of the local state agencies responsible for the public radiation safety in the regions should be placed as the running lines.

The clip ends with the graphic information, which includes the contact telephones. Those who give a call may receive additional information and specially prepared materials, which include the general information on radiation and radioactivity, advice, useful organizations and contact telephones.

The third area of the public educational campaign is the ecological bulletin, which highlights radiation safety and other environmental issues of a big city. The bulletin is distributed in the government and public organizations, 50 newspapers and magazines, which use its materials for their own publications.

Evidently, a similar campaign cannot but attract attention of the respective government structures. We announce about the existing danger and we make our best to improve the situation. We hope that the government will respond to this announcement in the form of increased funding. Thus, we have a commercial interest in attracting the largest client: the government. We are spending much money to achieve this purpose. In addition to the two above-mentioned features of an advertising campaign, a significant new one arises: public benefit.

**IT'S NOT
WHAT YOU SAY,
IT'S HOW YOU SAY IT**

