



Making Kids Brand Aware

New business from Chris Ward – founder of Beatwax and Firstmovies

Brands are products that have been given personalities that aim to make the consumer feel better about themselves. Children have very little awareness of this process. Therefore the pursuit of the most fashionable and expensive brands can cause debt in the home, the exclusion of friends from the social circle, playground bullying, depression, theft and even inhibit the development of a child's personality.

Children are bombarded with brilliantly creative advertisements, celebrity endorsement, pop-ups, advertorials, product placement and the resulting peer pressure. Most of which they don't fully understand but that have such a significant influence on them.

iKnow

"iKnow" is a not-for-profit business that informs children about issues they know little about but that have a major impact on their young lives.

This first campaign informs children between 8 and 12 (tweens), of how brands are created and work. The campaign deals with any potential negative effects of brand marketing and not the products themselves. It is not an anti-brand campaign but enables children to interact with brands with more knowledge and perspective.

This will be achieved through the input of key brands and agencies, the media, brand sponsored celebrities, a multi-media interactive roadshow, website, PR campaign and accompanying literature for parents.

The aim is for all children to feel confident, included and have friendships without playground talk of who owns what brand having undue influence.

Tweens

Tweens is a term created by the consumer industry to describe young children between 8 and 12 years old, because this age group has now become so important to retailers. As well as being the age at which children first consciously consider choosing brands they also have influence on 60% of all parental spend, 75% have a TV in their room and they see over 20,000 adverts a year. It now costs an average UK family £140,000 to bring up each child.

Therefore the marketing industry spends millions researching tweens, and creating extremely engaging brands and entertaining communications that do benefit from the lack of maturity in this market.

Chris Ward, founder of "iKnow" said

"Having spent fifteen years working with brands at the highest level I had the opportunity to step back and see how brand marketing can influence my own children and through my work as a Samaritan, the real damage that it can sometimes cause. I do think that some of the marketing industry pretend to themselves that pre-pubescent children are marketing savvy and have the nous to understand fully how they are being engaged by marketers".

"We have created this campaign so that marketers can use their skills to help eradicate some of the negative effects our industry's work can have on children and their families. We are already in discussions with some major brands, agencies and celebrities who use their talent in marketing brands and would like to also utilise that talent to work on the "iKnow" campaign".

“Everyone will benefit if children can live their lives with a knowledge and perspective on brands and marketing that they currently do not have. We shouldn’t undervalue the positive impact it is possible to make”.

Any further companies and individuals interested in contributing to the “iKnow” campaign should contact chris@iknow.it /0208 741 4439 or visit www.iknow.it

Further “iKnow” campaigns are planned to focus on understanding the media and globalisation.

Notes to editors:

Chris Ward founded two award winning marketing agencies: Beatwax, Britain’s fastest growing PR agency and PR campaign of the year award winner in 2003, with some of Britain’s most successful brands and entertainment properties as clients, such as Friends Reunited, Stella Artois, BBC, Disney, EMI, Evian, Shrek & Radiohead. Also he created Firstmovies, an on-line movie research and marketing business for the UK and Hollywood film industries. He sold both businesses and left last year.