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YEARS

Response



A SENSational Night!

The industry voted, and the weight-loss program takes home the DRMA Marketer of the Year, while Space Bag and Hampton Direct earn second and third place, respectively.

Hampton Direct's Steve Heroux and Space Bag Founder John Johns flank SENSE's Jeff Campbell in Las Vegas on Sept. 12.

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SENSA Products LLC earns the fourth annual DRMA Marketer of the Year Award, while finalists Space Bag and Hampton Direct also gain industry support for their successful products.

A Taste of VICTORY

BY THOMAS HAIRE

“With our background as an Internet company that has crossed over to more traditional channels, this means a tremendous amount to the team and puts the exclamation point on what we’ve been able to accomplish,” says Jeff Campbell, executive vice president of El Segundo, Calif.-based SENSEA Products LLC, the winner of the fourth annual DRMA Marketer of the Year Award. “It validates our methodology, our technology and our corporate philosophy — that by challenging ourselves every day, we can only go forward.”

Due to the continued success of its weight-loss system across all direct response media, SENSEA earned a decisive margin of victory among the more than 1,000 votes cast by DR industry marketers and vendors, while the other two finalists — Space Bag (marketers of the successful line of space-saving storage bags) and Hampton Direct (marketers of such products as PajamaJeans, InstaHang and Total Pillow) were neck-and-neck in the battle for second place. Campbell accepted the award in front of an overflow crowd at a ceremony and cocktail event on Sept. 14 at Las Vegas’ Chateau Rooftop nightclub, located outdoors underneath the Eiffel Tower at the Paris Las Vegas resort.

SENSA launched its weight-loss system campaign in 2008. By continuing to invest in new direct-to-consumer channels and continually improving its creative process to expand its campaigns beyond traditional DTC norms, the company’s business has continued to boom. While its television campaigns are nearly ubiquitous these days, SENSEA remains a massive online advertiser, driving more than 8 billion digital impressions and more than 200,000 Facebook fans.

San Diego-based Space Bag credits its hybrid DRTV model — designed to build brand and drive retail sales — for its success across 20 years in the DR space. The company boasts annual revenue of \$200 million and was recently acquired by housewares conglomerate SC Johnson. For a second consecutive year, Hampton Direct received the third-most votes from the DR industry, as experts continue to salute them for continued short-form-to-retail success. Its popular line of products also includes Twin Draft Guard, Stretch

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Genie and Furniture Fix, among others.

These three standouts earned finalist status in an industry vote among the top 17 nominees for the DRMA Marketer of the Year Award. During the coming months, each of the 17 nominees will be profiled in the pages of *Response*. However, these three finalists — and the winner — have truly set themselves apart.

Product and Precise Marketing Drive SENSEA

Campbell believes SENSEA’s ubiquity in the marketplace, as well as its activity in the DR community were crucial to the overwhelming response the company received in this year’s voting. “As an advertiser, it’s hard not to see us, so I think there is definitely a presence of mind in that respect,” he says. “More importantly, though, as a company we have become more active in the marketing community and have made a point of engaging with other advertisers and with media partners.”

Campbell also believes that SENSEA’s continued expansion across media channels not only played a role with voters, but is among the most important steps the company has made in the past year.

“As a company, we continue to push



The SENSEA marketing team mugs for the camera just moments after winning the 2012 DRMA Marketer of the Year Award in Las Vegas on Sept. 12.

ourselves and successfully launch into new channels — specifically retail,” he says. “The accomplishment has been our ability to maintain our direct-to-consumer business while still expanding our retail footprint.”

Campbell also attributes much of

SENSEA’s success to a consistent focus that he says begins with Intelligent Beauty, SENSEA’s parent company. “Intelligent Beauty has always been a company focused on health, wellness and feeling good about oneself,” he contends. “It is in our name, after all. SENSEA is just a great example of that — a product that helps people achieve their weight-loss goals in a safe, effective way. When people are successful, they feel much better about themselves. Our other companies do the same in their respective categories.”

At the same time, a rapid response to ever-changing technology has helped SENSEA maintain a leadership role in the weight-loss space. “The landscape is constantly changing, and the first thing you have to have is reporting,” Campbell says. “You need to be able to identify the trends as they come up. Then you can accurately assess if it’s something that needs to be addressed. For example, with the number of mobile devices accessing our sites rising 100 percent year-over-year, we have to have a mobile optimization strategy to capture that traffic.”

Still, while SENSEA’s strategy and

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DRMA MARKETER OF THE YEAR VOTING FINAL RESULTS

With more than 1,000 votes cast, the fourth annual DRMA Marketer of the Year competition drew interest from every corner of the direct response business. Here are the final results in this year’s balloting among the top 17 nominees:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. SENSEA Products LLC | 10. Bosley |
| 2. Space Bag | 11. Masterbuilt |
| 3. Hampton Direct | 12. Ideal Living |
| 4. BJ Global Direct | 13. Thane Direct |
| 5. LifeBrands Inc. | 14. Hearthware Inc. |
| 6. Positec Tool Corp. | 15. IBC/Modern Media |
| 7. Tristar Products | 16. ICON Health & Fitness |
| 8. GAIAM | 17. Torstar Media Group Television |
| 9. Ideavillage Products Corp. | |

technology has helped it overcome a tough economic landscape, Campbell is honest that his market is one of the most evergreen in the DR space. "Weight loss is an ongoing issue," he says. "Just because the economy is sluggish, it doesn't mean consumers are eating less. They just become more discerning and stick with programs that work."

Campbell beams when describing the feeling of being announced as the winner in Las Vegas last month. "It's all kind of a surreal experience, of course," he says. "My favorite moment was when our team got to goof around and take pictures after winning. It was fun to throw the Lucite award around, like it was the Stanley Cup! That's what team is all about."

And teamwork is how Campbell says SENSEA plans on expanding its success in the coming year — teamwork and brand power. "Our top priority is to keep up the pace and always push ourselves creatively," he says. "But when we think of the top items in our pipeline, it would have to be the brand itself and continuing to push it into new channels. From a strong base, we can grow our ancillary product lines."

Space Bag Team Has 2 Reasons to Celebrate

As the team at Space Bag considered just what it meant to become a part of the incredible line of products owned by SC Johnson, its nomination — and eventual second-place finish — for the DRMA Marketer of the Year Award was another cause to celebrate, especially for its founder, John Johns, and its long-time director of marketing, Betty Jamieson-Dunne.

"Oh, what a feeling!" Jamieson-Dunne exclaims. "Space Bag has consistently fought to maintain a strong DRTV presence while continuing to expand into retail, both domestically and internationally. I feel that this award is recognition of being successful at using DRTV as a tool to build a worldwide, sustainable brand."

Jamieson-Dunne says that Space Bag's move from an "old-school pitchman execution" to a "CPG-level creative" has helped drive the brand, and also response from the industry's voters. "Our

marketing team — including many of our industry professional vendor partners — has relentlessly implemented marketing strategies that have not only built a brand that dominates the category, but one that delivers DRTV accountability," she contends.

During the past year, Jamieson-Dunne says the company's been most proud of its growing market share in a category that's become more crowded. "Competitive storage and organization options continue to enter the market, yet Space Bag has been able to triple sales revenue during the past few years, while achieving profit goals," she says. "Many other companies are either a DRTV marketer or a retail marketer. Space Bag has found the formula to be successful at both."

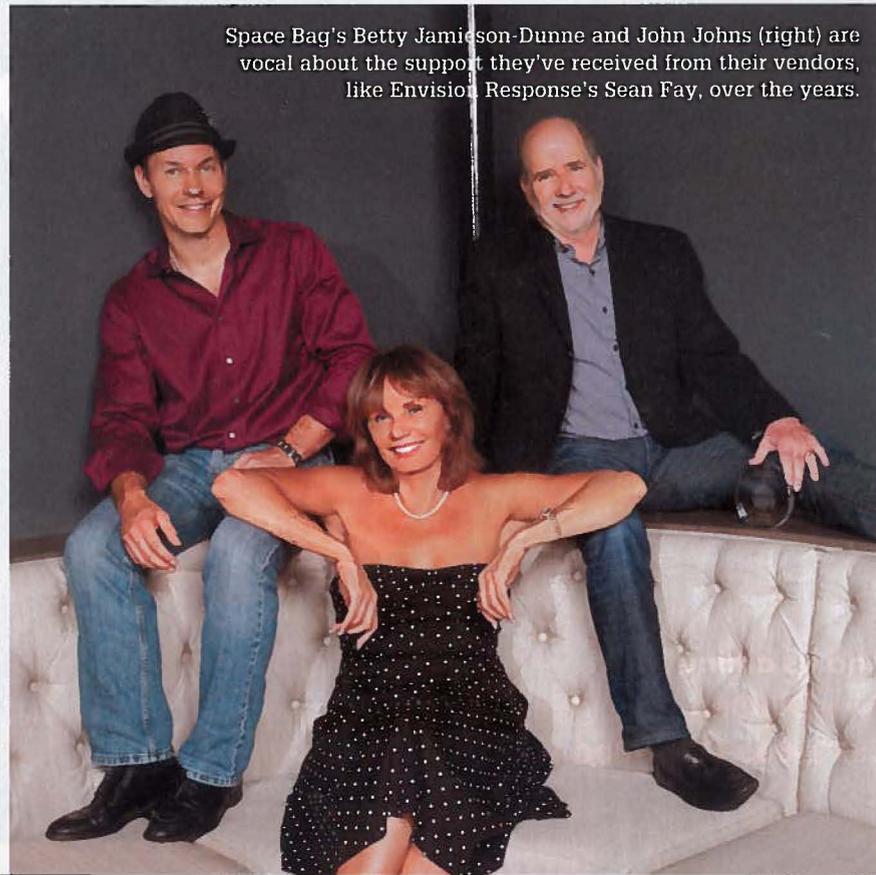
Not only that, but the company's continued rapid response to consumer needs and desires has helped it remain flexible and creative. "We see a need in the space, and we fulfill that need — isn't that what marketing is all about?" Jamieson-Dunne asks. "We've developed multiple product-line extensions, but always stayed focused on the core problem/solution. We are constantly testing consumer response

... and the key to our success is rapid response."

And in an economy spurring consumers to find ways to downsize and save money, Space Bag offers a great solution. "We fill a need that is attractive to the masses at a great value," Jamieson-Dunne says. "Needs like housing downsizing, helping people save more things but storing them effectively, and more."

At the same time, the company has looked to technology to help it grow its business in the past year. "We continue to look for green ways of improving our product offering, being conscious of protecting and saving our environment," Jamieson-Dunne says. "From a sales perspective, we're responding to new technology like growing electronic ordering devices — smartphones, iPads, etc. — as a DRTV ordering and distribution channel."

Moving forward, as Space Bag becomes part of the SC Johnson product line, Jamieson-Dunne says there is much to look forward to. "We believe that Space Bag will enjoy positive and continued growth, especially now that it will be co-branded with Ziploc, a trusted and proven consumer brand," she says.



Space Bag's Betty Jamieson-Dunne and John Johns (right) are vocal about the support they've received from their vendors, like Envision Response's Sean Fay, over the years.

Hampton Direct Earns Second-Consecutive Finalist Nod

"It's an honor to be recognized as one of the top marketers of 2012," says Steve Heroux, founder and CEO of Williston, Vt.-based Hampton Direct. "To be considered once again for this award, alongside so many impressive marketers, is incredibly humbling."

Not only was Hampton Direct considered for the Marketer of the Year Award, but for the second consecutive year, the company earned enough votes from DR industry leaders to finish third. Obviously, Hampton's string of successful short-form DRTV hits was a crucial reason voters gave Heroux's company so much support. But he believes there's more to it than that.

"Hampton is an 'out-of-the-box' thinking company," he says. "We are not afraid to be challenged, and our diverse background, focus and attention to detail let us make gambits that usually end in success."

Heroux says the company has a 60-percent success rate with its campaigns — an astounding number in an industry that generally still sees 19 campaigns out of 20 fail. "We work with integrity, doing what's right for our business model and our partners," he adds. "We've developed great marketing plans that have created long-lasting products and built brands."

Hampton's product successes have continued during the past year, with PajamaJeans building on the success it had in 2011, while newbies like Stretch Genie and InstaHang have relied on the Hampton formula to become retail success stories. "Our long-standing relationships with our retail partners, vendors and inventors are what help us develop products and bring them to market successfully," Heroux says. "We believe in our long-term vision."

That doesn't mean Hampton Direct isn't flexible to market changes. As a matter of fact, as the housewares market continued to gain steam in the past year, Heroux says Hampton's responded well. "PajamaJeans continues to be our game-changer ... it's made us better marketers,"



Hampton Direct's second-consecutive finalist nod knocked Steve Heroux flat. Fortunately, his team was there — as always — to support him.

he says. "But we tapped into the rapidly expanding housewares DR sector with great successes like Furniture Fix, InstaHang and Stretch Genie."

Hampton Direct has also been quick to respond to new technology in the DR space. "Certainly, as the Web continues to evolve and mature, it continues to change the way we spend some of our media dollars," Heroux says. "In the next 12 months, we're looking to incorporate more mobile marketing initiatives."

But, for a company known for rolling out one hit after another, the next 12 months also mean a series of promising new products. "Stretch Genie, our newest hit, entered retail last month," Heroux says. "We've got two new great problem-solvers rolling out in the fourth quarter and into retail in early 2013. And we're stepping into long-form for the first time — with a new show for PajamaJeans, featuring celebrity host and renowned dancer Kym Johnson. We also have a long-form beauty show with another celebrity host that we just wrapped production on."

Still, it's the continuing focus of Hampton Direct that Heroux believes will drive the company to even more success. "We look beyond a promising idea," he

says. "From manufacturing to price point, we focus on bringing products to market with the right factors for success." ■

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Contact: Bonnie Schalle
 Tel: 212-455-0177
 Fax: 212-455-0176
 E-mail: bschalle@emtvsales.com

E&M Media Group, Inc.
 1410 Broadway, Suite 1002
 New York, New York 10018
www.emtvsales.com