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About.com Debuts Advertiser-Focused Effort

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- Elaine Wong



[About.com](#) has launched a new campaign targeting brand advertisers and marketers that are looking to reach consumers on the Web.

The effort, which is rolling out over the next few weeks, introduces a new tagline: "Need. Know. Accomplish," and replaces the previous one: "Guidance, not guesswork." Ads highlight the information and advice site's ability to engage consumers from the "moment of need," and hold their attention as they use the site to "accomplish" a search-driven goal.

"When you really think about it, we boiled it down to those three words to [capture] how our users use the site to help them solve the large and small behaviors in everyday life," said Evan Minskoff, marketing vp of About.com—a unit of

The New York Times Co.

About.com has already launched some elements of the campaign, created by Gigantic in New York. The first is a series of 30-second animated shorts, which initially aired at New York's Citi Field and Yankee Stadium in late June. The spots illustrate the campaign's tagline with a functional approach. One spot, for instance, presents the need to "spend some quality time with son," which translates to "plan the perfect day at the ball park" and "memories that will last a lifetime."

Unlike previous About.com campaigns, the new ads rely heavily on animated graphics and not photography.

Cella Irvine, CEO of The About Group, which includes About.com, ConsumerSearch.com and CalorieCount.com, said the campaign reflects the current media landscape. "Marketers are under more and more pressure to show results and [we're] showing the value of capturing that with a [targeted] brand message. This was not the case three or four years ago," said Irvine.

In research conducted with Insights Group, About.com found that consumers responded well to ads that helped them go from a "need" to "accomplish" state. Minskoff described the trend as moving from a "tolerance to the ad" to a "welcoming and acceptance for it" and, in some cases, using it as a "decision-making tool." For example, 60 percent of consumer electronics seekers on About.com were "welcoming" of related ads and used them to do more research on a product or make a purchase, per the company.

Other components of the campaign include out-of-home advertising on phone kiosks and subway platforms in the New York City area in September. Taxi top and aerial beach banners have already been spotted in New York and New Jersey. Most of the advertising, however, will break in the fall.

About.com spent \$1.1 million on advertising last year and \$300,000 through the first quarter of this year, per Kantar Media.

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