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Green ads catching on

Creators of statewide campaign hope to spread message

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A homegrown message promoting environmentally friendly habits is appearing on television, radio and billboards statewide, and its Pensacola creators hope that's just a start.

The public service spots feature "Eco" the butterfly and urge viewers and listeners to "Think ecologically. Reduce, Reuse, Recycle."

A related Web site outlines steps consumers can take to follow Eco's advice, from using rechargeable batteries at home to using both sides of paper for printing at the office.

Eco was a collaboration between Ross Orenstein and Mona Amodeo, partners in the Pensacola firm Music as Message. Amodeo also is president and founder of the local ad agency idgroup.

Music as Message, founded last year, aims to develop corporate sponsorship of socially responsible messages targeted primarily at kids, using music and kid-friendly graphics as a hook.

As an example of the powerful force of music as a learning tool, Orenstein asks adults to remember how they learned the alphabet: "Through a song."

In their work on the fledgling company's goals, Orenstein and Amodeo had a basic concept of an environmentally friendly message targeting kids. Something simple, with a catchy tune.

Coincidentally, Orenstein was public service chairman for the American Advertising Federation's fourth district, which includes 25 chapters throughout Florida and the Caribbean.

And the theme for the district's public service campaign this year? The environment.

"We said 'Voila!' " said Orenstein, who has a song-writing background and has written music for McGruff the Crime Dog, Rotary International and Coca-Cola.

The message is purposely simple and the tone is purposely light.

"Things can get very complicated," Amodeo said. "But each of us has the power to make small choices that make a difference."

Contributions

Orenstein wrote the music used in the campaign, idgroup graphic artist Kristoffer Poore drew the butterfly named Eco and a St. Petersburg ad firm created the animated television public service announcement that brought the elements together.

Statewide audience

Two ad agencies in Orlando are handling marketing events and public relations for the campaign, which will continue through the end of June. Locally, Eco is expected to show up on some Lamar Advertising's digital billboards, as well as on public-service announcements on WEAR-TV Channel 3.

Other companies are using the campaign's message in the publications and Web sites.

A life-size Eco made an appearance at the campaign's rollout in Tallahassee and is expected to participate Tuesday as part of the "Children's Day" in the capital.

But Orenstein and Amodeo hope Eco's flight doesn't end in June.

"Our bigger goal is to make this a national campaign," Amodeo said.

She and Orenstein envision Eco's image on recycling bins nationwide and in curricula aimed at teaching school children the basics of reusing items, reducing waste and energy consumption, and recycling as much as possible.

Along the way, they expect kids will pass on what they've learned to their parents.

"It's almost that we're coming to adults through the back door," Amodeo said.
