



HOT SKEW SHOWDOWN

PSYCHOGRAPHIC AUTO ADVERTISING

How do you plug a Suzuki Hip-Hop Grand Vitara to a Millennial? What about an Accord Hybrid to an environmentalist? Local advertising pros are weighing in on the tools it takes to market to Sarasota's baby boomers, Generation-Xers, tree-huggers, fashionistas and more in today's auto trade. Todd Beckwith, director of business development and marketing for Sarasota's WhiteSand Communications, says Ford zeroes in on NASCAR supporters because 56 percent of Ford owners classify themselves as race fans.

Honda targets "socially conscious" buyers for models such as the Accord Hybrid, and to this end, sponsors the eco-friendly Great American Cleanup. To hit "high-fashion influencers," Lexus partners with Neiman Marcus, Saks Fifth Avenue and Mercedes Benz. A Jeep Wrangler buyer is an adventurer. A Volvo driver cares about safety. Porsche fans are likely to be doctors or lawyers. Mercury Marquis and Ford Crown Victoria appeal to the "silent generation" and police departments, says Roxanne Joffe, president of CAP.

"A local auto dealer has a unique opportunity to use 'experiential' campaigns to connect their models with their target demographic," Beckwith says. "This approach also differentiates the dealer and creates their own personality." Dilemmas arise when auto manufacturers confuse their customer bases, like when VW introduced "luxury" models instead of focusing on its tried-and-true workhorse commuters. Sales inevitably suffered. "If Suzuki cared to reach baby boomers with their Grand Vitara, they'd come out with a version that strikes an emotional chord that resonates with that generation," Joffe says. "That's why we see Dennis Hopper as spokesperson for Ameriprise (with Spencer Davis Group's 'Gimme Some Lovin' as a soundtrack), trying to get boomers to prepare for an active retirement." It's also why Cadillac introduced its edgier new style in 2002 with Led Zeppelin's "Rock and Roll." Their silent generation customers were dying off. —AW

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HOT VISITOR

DR. MARY FURLONG

She sashayed into town and brought some big ideas. Nationally recognized baby boomer expert Dr. Mary Furlong—who has consulted with numerous Fortune 500 companies on how to reach the "Me Generation"—announced in April she had visited Sarasota three times in three months. The author and entrepreneur's trips to SRQ included speaking engagements at the Sarasota International Design Summit in November 2007 and at an Economic Development Corporation of Sarasota County luncheon in April, during which she brainstormed innovative ideas on how Sarasota could take advantage of the boomer market. Furlong has mentioned publicly and privately that she'd like to buy property in Sarasota, and we got to thinking about the ways her influence could shape our city. "She'll make us younger with all of her energy," says Ringling College of Art and Design President Dr. Larry Thompson, who spent time with Furlong during her visits. All we can say is we hope there's a local real estate agent working to close a deal with the big-name boomer.

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**TOP 10 WAYS FURLONG'S RESIDENCY
COULD CHANGE SARASOTA**

1. Furlong helps launch Sarasota as the first Global Silver Enterprise Zone. Sarasota consults with other cities and companies on how to reach boomers and becomes a test bed for boomer products and services.
2. Following the advice of Furlong, a Sarasota company draws national attention to the area and brings millions to the local market as it designs hearing aids that look—and sparkle—like designer earrings.
3. Salsa dancing—a pastime Furlong always sought out during her visits to Sarasota—explodes on the late night circuit as the fun-loving woman, who turns 60 next month, encourages other boomers to hit the town. "I try to party wherever I go," Furlong says.

4. Furlong helps market Sarasota as the "Caregivers Escape" and companies offer discounts and retreats for people who are enjoying a break from caring for loved ones.
5. "Are you on Facebook?" is no longer heard among the Horsefeathers crowd, but rather among the older, Michael's On East crowd on a Saturday night. Furlong, a Facebook fan, sends all her new Sarasota friends invites to join the social networking site.
6. Furlong helps Ringling College of Art and Design students and local manufacturers partner to design wheel chairs that look like sports cars.
7. Sales at the Columbian Restaurant on St. Armands Circle soar and a wave of new Cuban restaurants open in downtown Sarasota as Furlong, a Cuban food fanatic, inspires others to indulge in her favorite cuisine.
8. Following Furlong's lead, in-home personal training becomes popular among Sarasota boomers.
9. A Longboat Key company launches a boomer-designed community, complete with a tech center, a wine club, guest speakers, organic food and car services.
10. As a Silver Enterprise Zone, Sarasota inspires a travel company to launch Sixty and Sexy singles cruises. "If you think women alone are going to be crying and weeping, you have the wrong image," Furlong says of single boomers. "I know the data on the kinds of lingerie they wear, and you would be shocked." —LD