

In addition to archiving DRTV commercials, I also collect industry wisdom. Someday, maybe I'll publish what I've gathered under the title, "The Aphorisms of DRTV." For now, I present three wise sayings from my collection — two new, one old — using recent projects as examples.

Finishing Touch Flawless Brows

Description: An eyebrow trimmer

Main Pitch: "Hold it like a pencil, use it like an eraser."

Main Offer: \$19.99 for one

Bonus: Free shipping on multiples

Marketer: Ideavillage Products

Rating: 5 out of 5

"When you discover a hit, run it for all it's worth."



The original version of this aphorism comes from Dick Wechsler, founder of Lockard & Wechsler Direct. It can be found in his list of media wisdom known as the "Rules for DRTV Success." Here, I modify and expand it to say something about the new trend in DRTV brands. While still rare, these brands are deep mines capable of producing multiple hits across several years. Witness the seemingly endless success of **Gotham Steel/Red Copper/Copper Chef** cookware, or the currently unstoppable Tac and Atomic lines. The Flawless beauty brand has emerged to join them. The original facial hair remover was a monster hit, ending 2017 at No. 3 on the *True Top 50*. At press time, a second product called **Flawless Legs** had reached No. 8 on the *DRMetrix Weekly Top 40*. Now comes this brow product. Each Flawless product is more beautifully designed than the last, and Blue Reef Productions keeps outdoing itself with one stunningly gorgeous commercial after another. In other words, Ideavillage is clearly on the path of running this one for all it's worth.

Gotham Steel Pancake Bonanza

Description: A pancake pan

Main Pitch: "The fast, easy, and low-fat way to make fluffy, delicious pancakes every day."

Main Offer: \$19.99 for one

Bonus: Waffle Bonanza (just pay P&H)

Marketer: Emson Inc.

Rating: 3 out of 5

"Beware of chasing 'Fool's Gold.'"



Bringing back "Old Gold," especially with a new twist, is a smart and proven success strategy. But sometimes you end up chasing products that just looked like gold. This one is interesting because it has both characteristics. The original, certified gold was Merchant Media's **Perfect Pancake** in 2002. Allstar and Merchant Media brought it back in 2013 and rolled it out again. However, the second time they ended up in a duel with TELEBrands, which had just launched a similar product under the **Orgreenic** brand (**Flip Jack**). The result was two campaigns pushed for competitive reasons but that didn't necessarily have the strong consumer demand of the first time around. This is a common occurrence, as it can often be hard to know how strong a "hit" really is until the retail post mortem. I know of many examples where the marketer in question ended up regretting the decision to roll out. To quote a more well-known aphorism: All that glitters is not gold.

Broadway Beauty

Description: A tabletop vanity mirror

Main Pitch: "See every detail up close and in just the right light."

Main Offer: \$29.99 for one

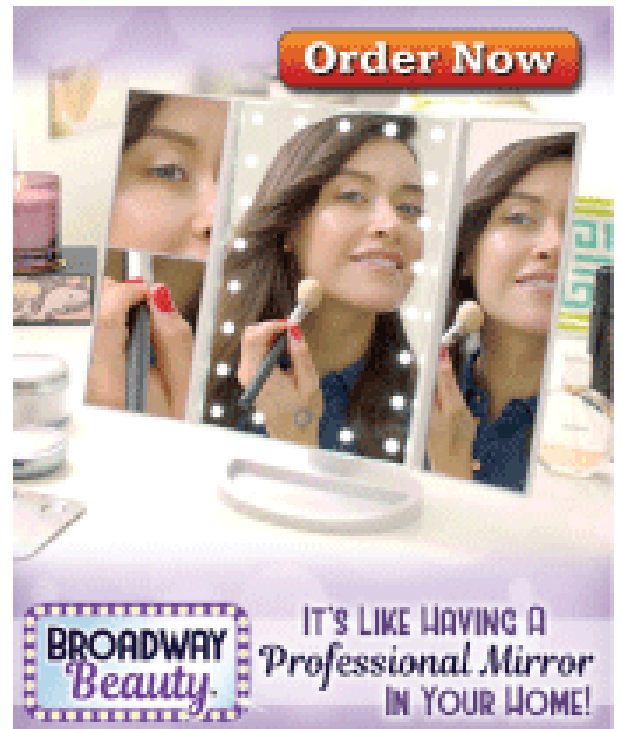
Bonus: Second one (just pay a separate fee), lighted compact (free)

Marketer: BulbHead

Rating: 2 out of 5

"One is an outlier, three is a category."

The outlier here is Emson's **My Foldaway Mirror**, which was on the charts in 2017 but missed the *True Top 50* by about 20 spots. Every other attempt has failed, including Ontel's **Flawless Mirror** (August 2017), TELEBrands' **My Fab Face** (June 2017), and InvenTel's **Mirror Mirror** (October 2016). I predict we'll soon be adding this name to the list. Broaden the category to vanity lights that can be stuck onto existing mirrors, and the number of fails doubles. Indeed, if not for Emson's quasi-success, I would be declaring this a "Siren" category. It definitely hasn't presented the three hits that would make it worthy of serious consideration.



What Makes up the SciMark Seven? The PRODUCT should be: (1) needed; (2) targeted; and (3) different. The CATEGORY should be: (4) un-crowded. The COMMERCIAL should be: (5) engaging; (6) motivating; and (7) clear.

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