

## SCIMARK REPORT

BY JORDAN PINE

### FLEX-ABLE BUNGEE HOSE

**Description:** An expanding hose

**Main Pitch:** “The Flex-Able Hose that’s bungee strong”

**Main Offer:** Starting at \$19.99 for one

**Bonus:** Second one (just pay P&H)

**Starring:** Brian Hyder

**Marketer:** Tristar Products

**Website:** [www.FlexibleBungeeHose.com](http://www.FlexibleBungeeHose.com)

**Rating:** 3 out of 5 ★★☆☆☆



The “hose war” I first wrote about in September 2012 has developed into a full-blown war of line extensions, with marketers releasing new-and-improved versions of their hoses each and every year. Last year, Tristar’s **Flex-Able Hose Tough Grade** battled TELEBrands’ **Pocket Hose Ultra** and the original marketer’s **X-Hose Pro**. This new project comes on the heels of **Pocket Hose Top Brass**, and I’m sure a better **X-Hose** is soon to follow. What this represents is a combination of two trends I’ve written about recently: fiercer competition (in the form of more

duels) and a gradual shift toward traditional marketing tactics — of which line and brand extensions are often a centerpiece. What’s more interesting is that in this case, it’s all being done with a core product that has had terrible customer-satisfaction ratings. At press time, the original **X-Hose**, **Pocket Hose** and **Flex-Able Hose Pro** all were averaging just two out of five stars in Amazon customer reviews. The **Pocket Hose Ultra** was slightly better, at 2.5 stars, but the **X-Hose Pro** was worse at 1.7 stars (The **Flex-Able Hose Tough Grade** is not sold on Amazon). Yet none of

this seems to have hurt sales, at least not in a way that would discourage continued use of the brands in question. It could be a case of “the seen vs. the unseen” (*i.e.*, perhaps with better reviews, this would have been an even bigger business). Or it could be my contention that customer satisfaction doesn’t matter much in DR — something I wrote about elsewhere and for which I received a lot of criticism — is right on the money after all. I report, you decide.

### STAIN 911

**Description:** A stain remover

**Main Pitch:** “Removes virtually any oil stain ... let it dry and then sweep it away”

**Main Offer:** \$10 for a double-sized bottle

**Bonus:** Second double-sized bottle (just pay a separate fee)

**Marketer:** TELEBrands

**Website:** [www.Stain911.com](http://www.Stain911.com)

**Rating:** 3 out of 5 ★★☆☆☆



The cleaning category is resurgent, with three hits appearing on the charts in the past few months (**InstaGone Pro**, **InVinceable** and **My Cleaning Secret**), but marketers would do well to remember the lessons of the past. Attacking the entrenched competition (*i.e.*, the big brands) in a frontal assault is a losing strategy. Attacking from the unprotected flanks is what works, and that’s what TELEBrands is doing here. We all can name a popular cleaner for carpet or clothing stains, but try to name one for oil stains in your garage. Of course, the reason none of the big guys promote a solution for this problem may be that it’s not common enough with which to bother.

### TRAVEL CLEAN

**Description:** A travel kit

**Main Pitch:** “Take control of your health and safety”

**Main Offer:** \$14.95 for three kits

**Bonus:** Three more kits (just pay S&P), guidebook and \$100 in coupons

**Website:** [www.TravelClean.com](http://www.TravelClean.com)

**Rating:** 1 out of 5 ★☆☆☆☆

On the blog, I would have filed this under, “The Dangers of DIY DR.” It was obviously selected and put on TV by novices. Anyone with a clue would know that a travel item pitched to germophobes is a horrible idea. Talk about segmenting a segment! As for the commercial, I typically try not to lead with people passing gas — but to each his own.



### 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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