

If I cared about looking good, I'd give every campaign that's high on the charts a rating of at least four stars. As this month's report will clearly demonstrate, I don't believe in doing that. Here's hoping you appreciate my honesty because I could end up looking quite foolish for doubting items that are obviously successful on DRTV right now.

Arctic Air

Description: An evaporative air cooler

Main Pitch: The "quick and easy way to cool any space"

Main Offer: Two-pay of \$19.99 with free shipping

Bonus: Second one (just pay a separate fee)

Marketer: Ontel Products

Rating: 3 out of 5

This was a top-10 DRTV campaign at press time (No. 9 on the DRMetrix *Weekly Top 40*). My first impression when it tested in September was that it's the hot-weather version of **Handy Heater** (No. 46 on the 2016 *True Top 50*). Because of that association, I thought it would suffer from

credibility problems. Apparently, Blue Moon's commercial has overcome that barrier. However, I still predict difficulties for this campaign because of sales-killing negative reviews. Almost half of the reviews on Amazon for Handy Heater are one-star and, like its predecessor, this product can't possibly deliver on its promise.



Bavarian Edge

Description: A knife sharpener

Main Pitch: "Make your old blades razor-sharp in seconds"

Main Offer: \$19.99 for one

Bonus: Second one (just pay a separate fee)

Marketer: BulbHead

Rating: 3 out of 5

Every few years, there's a new rollout in the knife-sharpener category. In 2012, SAS Group's **Samurai Pro** and TELEBrands' **Edge of Glory** both became *True Top Spenders*. In 2015, it was Hampton's **Swifty Sharp**. This year we have this item, which was No. 12 on the DRMetrix *Weekly Top 40* at press time. I remain skeptical, though. One reason is that I know of many failed knife sharpeners most have never heard about (because they bombed quickly).

Another reason is my perception that the hits mentioned above were mediocre sellers at best. Now, there's nothing wrong with having a few mediocre performers in a portfolio that includes bigger hits. I'm only claiming that we shouldn't think of these as four- or five-star opportunities. That said, I admit I'm impressed with the success this item is enjoying so far. I wouldn't have bet on it.



Fast Fail

Air Glass

Description: A glass humidifier and diffuser

Main Pitch: "Gently humidifies air while diffusing scented oil for up to eight hours"

Main Offer: \$39.99 for one with two essential oils

Bonus: Double the offer (just pay a separate fee)

Marketer: Allstar Products

Rating: 4 out of 5

To *really* test my honesty and continue a theme from last month, I thought I'd present one project I thought would succeed but didn't. For me, this represents a disproved hypothesis: That "hand-blown glass" was the secret to the success of an "Old Gold" item called **Aqua Globes** (No. 26 on the 2008 Jordan Whitney Annual). After helping to thoroughly debunk the idea that automatic plant watering was a category (via multiple failures to replicate its success), I thought this hypothesis was promising. It made sense to me that a decorative, artistic element could help differentiate a device that is clearly in demand right now. Apparently not. It seems evident that Aqua Globes was just another DRTV outlier.



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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