

## SCIMARK REPORT

BY JORDAN PINE

This month's theme is "breaking the rules." Of course, no veteran of DRTV really believes in rules. However, I have a penchant for promoting guidelines that are widely perceived as rules, so it's only fair that I call attention to the rollouts that contradict them.



### DIAL VISION

**Description:** Adjustable eyeglasses

**Main Pitch:** "The perfect backup, so you can get on with your life"

**Main Offer:** \$19.99 for one with eye chart and protective hard case

**Bonus:** Sunglasses version (just pay a separate fee)

**Marketer:** TELEBrands

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

**Rating:** 5 out of 5 ★★★★★

Rule violated: "In DR, the third time is seldom the charm." In this case, a fresh approach turned a loser into a winner. Originally tested as **Instant 20/20** in April 2013, the project suffered from a muddled pitch and did not roll out. TELEBrands picked up the product five months later and tried it again as **Clear Control** with (appropriately) a clearer pitch about being able to "easily see near or far." That still didn't do the trick, but it must have come close enough to warrant this third attempt. Jackpot: apparently, the right approach was to position the item as a cheap pair of backup glasses — and then talk about all of its other cool features. In other words, this ends up being a value play, which is not at all surprising. Discount glasses e-tailer Warby Parker has been getting a lot of buzz, and \$20 is quite a significant savings even when compared to their prices.

### FREE TV KEY

**Description:** An HD digital antenna

**Main Pitch:** "You don't need expensive cable or satellite anymore"

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

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

**Starring:** Brian Hyder

**Marketer:** Tristar Products

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

**Rating:** 4 out of 5 ★★★★☆

Rule violated: "It takes seven to 10 years for a hit to repeat." In this case, we only had to wait two years as this rollout follows Tristar's **Clear TV**, a 2014 **True Top Spender**. Not only that, but the market is apparently much larger than previously thought. This campaign is sharing the airwaves with two similar campaigns: TELEBrands' **TV Free-Way** and InvenTel's **HD Free TV**. Evidently, the promise of costless cord cutting is quite powerful, possibly heading toward "lose weight without dieting or exercise" territory.



### MAGIC TRACKS

**Description:** A race track

**Main Pitch:** "Can bend, flex, and glow as the cars go, go, go"

**Main Offer:** \$19.99 for one car and 220 track pieces

**Bonus:** Double the offer (just pay P&H)

**Marketer:** Ontel Products

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

**Rating:** 3 out of 5 ★★★☆☆

Rule violated: "Avoid crowded categories." Actually, this one violates a newer guideline of mine as well: avoid the toy category unless you know what you're doing. Most DR marketers don't. Ontel has a leg up thanks to **Pillow Pets** and its line extensions. In any case, the counter-argument to the main rule is that sometimes crowded categories get stale and become open to innovation. Racing cars are about as stale as you can get. (Matchbox® cars were first introduced in 1953.) Glow-in-the-dark is always a good "wow," and it appears it was enough to get kids unglued from their screens long enough to pester their parents for a non-virtual racing game for a change.



#### 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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