

## SCIMARK REPORT

BY JORDAN PINE

### NEW ZIPPERED BLANKETS TRIPLE DUEL!

In the December 2014 issue of *Response*, I wrote about the first four-way duel. In a separate piece, I also predicted duels would become the norm and that even multi-way duels wouldn't be uncommon. So far, 2015 is proving me right — in spades. Since April, every column I've written for this magazine has featured a duel. Now comes this new triple duel, the second of the year, and we still have five months to go!



#### ZIPPY SACK

**Main Pitch:** "Transforms your bed into a cuddly friend ... don't make your bed, zip it up instead!"

**Main Offer:** \$29.99 for twin size (seven characters, two prints)

**Bonus:** Carrying case (free)

**Marketer:** TechnoSource

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

**Rating:** 4 out of 5 ★★★★★☆



#### ZIP BLANKIES

**Main Pitch:** "Bedtime's a blast and you can make your bed zip-it-up fast"

**Main Offer:** \$29.99 for twin size (five characters)

**Bonus:** Travel bag (free)

**Marketer:** Tristar Products

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

**Rating:** 4 out of 5 ★★★★★☆



#### ZIPIT BEDDING

**Main Pitch:** "Works just like a sleeping bag, so it's easy, fast and fun"

**Main Offer:** \$49.99 for twin size plus fitted sheet (six prints, three solids)

**Bonus:** Matching zippered pillow case (free)

**Marketer:** Ontel Products

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

**Rating:** 3 out of 5 ★★★★★☆☆

As my long-time readers know, I've never considered myself an expert in kid-targeted DR. That's because there appears to be no scientific way to approach the category. Think of the biggest hits of the past decade and you'll see the problem. Could any methodology have predicted the success of a flat plush animal that folds into a pillow? Nevertheless, I have collected a few criteria for the category along the way. For instance, products that appeal to both kids and parents seem to have higher odds of success. Likewise products that elicit a "gotta-have-it" reaction from kids (pester power) and with which they can play (play value) appear to drive the most sales. The first two versions of this project meet all of those criteria. They will appeal to parents because the blanket's zipper and fitted edges makes it easy for little ones to make their own beds. They will appeal to kids for the

same reason (hence the nagging mom scenes) and because they feature fun characters. As for who will win this duel, I give the edge to the follower: Tristar. Even though TechnoSource was first, has the better commercial, and is certainly an expert in toy distribution, Tristar is more experienced when it comes to executing a high volume DRTV-to-retail campaign. Meanwhile, Ontel has even more experience in this particular area, having successfully launched the aforementioned **Pillow Pets** and its extensions (**Dream Lites, Go Pets**). Yet it decided to position its product more broadly and forego the jingles and characters. Ontel also led with a bigger offer but a more expensive base price. Both decisions are theoretically correctable should they prove to be mistakes, but by then the competition will have a formidable head start.

#### 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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