

CAMPAIGN SPOTLIGHT

# Foundation and MTV Hope Campaign Is 'Dead On' With Youths

By STUART ELLIOTT

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When it comes to scaring and delighting youthful audiences these days, zombies are right up there with vampires and werewolves. An effort to discourage smoking among teenagers and young adults is seeking to take advantage of that lively interest in the undead.

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The American Legacy Foundation in Washington, which sponsors the anti-smoking "Truth" campaign, is joining forces with the MTV cable channel for an initiative called "The Real World: Zombieville." The project is based on "The Real World," the long-running reality series on MTV that brings together a group of young adults to live in a house in locales that have ranged from Brooklyn to Hawaii to Paris.

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To strengthen the ties between "Zombieville" and "The Real World," the "Zombieville" commercials are appearing during the current installment of the series, "The Real World: New Orleans," on Wednesday nights on MTV, and can also be watched on a section of an MTV [Web site](#).

And the "Zombieville" commercials are being produced in the vein of episodes of "The Real World," echoing aspects like the diversity of cast members, the use of hand-held cameras and having the cast speak, confessional-style, to the audience.

In this instance, however, the cast is composed of actors, rather than real people, and they are cohabiting in a house surrounded by hungry zombies — is there any other kind? — who are picking them off one by one.

The "Zombieville" commercials, each a minute long, are replete with violent goings-on and drenched in fake blood — the better to liken the effects of smoking, and the marketing methods of the tobacco industry, to the relentless havoc wreaked by zombies in fiction.

The twist is, of course, that cigarettes are part of the real world, not the fevered imagination of the authors of books, screenplays or TV scripts.

"Zombieville" began with a teaser spot during the episode of "The Real World" that appeared on Aug. 18. Two commercials are running during each of the next three episodes, on Aug. 25, Sept. 1 and Sept. 8, for a total of six. Then there will be wrap-ups during the episode to be shown on Sept. 15.

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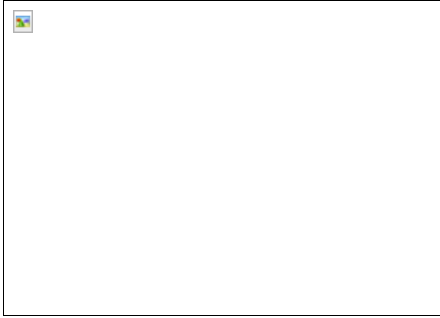
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BUSINESS

## "Zombieville"

Television Ad From the Truth Campaign

makers against them, first appeared nationally a decade ago. It was based on a concept created by Crispin Porter & Bogusky for anti-smoking ads aimed at youths who lived in the state of Florida.

Crispin Porter and Arnold Worldwide, part of Havas, cooperated on the "Truth" creative assignment until 2007, when it was consolidated at Arnold. Among the fruits of their collaboration was a commercial that appeared during the [Super Bowl](#) in 2004 for a make-believe product named Shards O'Glass Freeze Pops — frozen treats studded with sharp pieces of glass.

The Shards O'Glass spot was intended to mock how tobacco marketers belatedly conceded the dangers of smoking by presenting the chief executive of the imaginary Shards O'Glass company who discusses the unhealthy aspects of his products.

"Exposing the tactics" of cigarette marketing "has been an incredibly powerful tool for us," says Mr. Asche, whose name is pronounced, appropriately enough, "Ashy."

"We will never be able to out-shout the industry because the industry spends more in a day than what I spend in an entire year," he adds, so "when we tell the truth, that resonates with consumers, as much today as in the past."

The original Shards O'Glass commercial returned on June 30, during the season premiere of "The Real World: New Orleans," and two new ones are appearing during the run of this installment. In one, the chief executive character introduces another (fake) product as dangerous to the human throat as a zombie, Shards O'Glass Spheres.

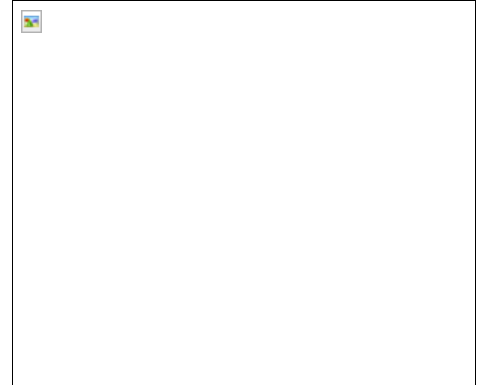
MTV and the "Truth" campaign share "a similar esthetic in how we talk to the consumer," Mr. Asche says, and executives at MTV have "shown a keen interest in our issue."

The "Truth" creative team at Arnold helped with story lines for the "Zombieville" commercials, which are being produced by MTV to enhance their resemblance to "The Real World."

"Zombieville" is the most recent example of a collaboration between the foundation and MTV, part of the MTV Networks unit of [Viacom](#), that dates to 2006. As the foundation seeks to stretch its limited advertising budget, estimated at \$30 million a year, it is working with media companies to develop ideas that go beyond traditional commercials.

"MTV has proven to be a great partner for us," says Eric Asche, senior vice president for marketing at the foundation, which was created as part of the landmark 1998 settlement between the tobacco industry and attorneys general.

The "Truth" campaign, which seeks to turn the marketing tactics of cigarette



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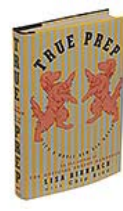
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