

American Chiropractic Association Quashes Irresponsible Radio Advertisements

AGENCY LESS THAN COOPERATIVE

Dynamic Chiropractic Staff

American Chiropractic Association, in close cooperation with the North Carolina Chiropractic Association, brought an immediate halt to a distasteful portrayal of chiropractic on WTRG radio in Raleigh, North Carolina.

Representatives of WTRG were quick to remove the offensive advertisements from the station's schedule and were most cooperative with representatives of the ACA registering the complaint (Clayton-Davis & Associates, Inc., Public Relations, St. Louis, MO).

In one advertisement a person states that when shopping for an automobile, he usually gets jerked around more than when he gets his arms, legs, and back adjusted from his chiropractor. In the other, he states his toupee' was jerked from his head by a ceiling fan.

The firm that produced the original advertisement, and apparently is marketing it to automobile dealerships nationwide, is TSI Ads of Hollywood, Florida. Representatives of the agency were not cooperative to suggestions their product is offensive and refused to cease marketing the product to dealerships citing "right of free speech."

"The American Chiropractic Association will continue to monitor this type of anti-chiropractic media portrayal," said Association Communications Director David R. Shingler, "and in close cooperation with the ACA's activist membership and close ties with state associations will make every effort to get future advertisements of this type off the air."

"This incident," Shingler continued, "is reminiscent of an incident this past summer in which a national automotive manufacturer offered a similar portrayal of chiropractic and the ACA, in close cooperation with several state associations (Michigan and California), as well as action on the part of the ICA, persuaded the national automotive supplier to cease the disparaging portrayal of chiropractic."

"This past summer chiropractic saw how bridges can be built with some of the nation's largest and most influential corporations. The Ford Motor Company and their representatives were quick to respond and have offered to explore areas of communal interest. A bridge was built, chiropractic can be furthered because of mature and 'real world' responses on the part of the ACA," Shingler offered. The ACA, according to Shingler, is concerned about reports of chiropractic associations badgering the Ford Motor Company following its admission of error and offering of seeking common ground.

Said Shingler, "Chiropractic must perform within the 'whole' of society if it is to be completely mainstreamed into the health care community. Building a bridge with the Ford Motor Company is an incremental step. Efforts to undermine that bridge are potentially hazardous, even while I am fully

aware of any association's right to do so. Sure, their (Ford's) initial efforts were offensive. But not only did they not contest that, they were cooperative beyond our wildest imaginations in pulling the advertisements from national distribution. That was not an easy task."

In the case of Ford, the sponsoring advertising agency also agreed to the cessation of running the advertisement. This time, with WTRG, the initial response from the sponsoring agency has not been favorable.

"This agency will no doubt try to 'sell its wares' to dealerships across the country. The ACA's member, and non-members alike, hopefully will turn to the ACA to get station cooperation in pulling the advertisement," said Shingler. "The ACA's public relations consultants are confident that the agency will indeed be persuaded by the flack they get each time the ACA mobilizes its forces in response -- market by market," concluded Shingler, who closed by offering the ACA's national 1-800 number (1-800-368-3083; 1-703-276-8800, ext. 210 if in Virginia) to ACA members or nonmembers who hear of other advertisements of this nature.

This time though, the agency that developed the advertisement is not being as cooperative as the agency involved with the Ford situation. We are exploring options but, quite frankly, I do not think others (legal) will be fruitful. Freedom of speech is a powerful tool.

Editor's Note:

Freedom of speech is indeed a powerful tool. But it is also a two way street. These kinds of incidents are obviously going to be of concern to your patients. You will probably have to let your patients and your community know the final details of each incident.

You may even want to call or write this agency and express your feelings on this matter. Many times freedom of speech can be used to help others become more aware of those issues that are important to you.

To communicate your feelings with the agency responsible for this incident, please write or call:

TSI Advertising
Attention: Dave Smith
5900 Dewey Street
Hollywood, FL 33023
(305) 981-6550

NOVEMBER 1990