

# Surprise! Northwest a Hotbed for DRTV Production

BY SEAN K. FAY GUEST COLUMNIST

Here in the Northwest, we make lots of little movies. Movies that get seen by millions and millions of people. You've seen them. These little movies can be as short as a minute and as long as half an hour. They're movies that appeal to hearts and minds. They're movies with an attitude and a message.

Yes, I'm talking about infomercials, also known as direct response television advertising, or DRTV.

Now, you ad snobs reading this can laugh while dabbing on some more Calvin Klein cologne, but I know there's a bunch of you out there who are saying to yourself, "I love infomercials! They're so crazy, I have to watch 'em." And you're not alone.

DRTV is here to stay, for the simple reason that it is an extremely effective tool in getting viewers to buy stuff. And despite what its detractors might say ("Half those products are crap!") the truth is—at least for the DRTV companies here in the Pacific Northwest—he public

loves the products we promote.

Washington companies such as Seattle's Cesari Direct and my new shop Envision Response have created some of the biggest infomercials in history, for products people love to

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tell their friends and neighbors about.

Infomercials I have personally produced have aired over 15,000 times in a single year on American broadcast and cable media, and countless more times overseas in nations around the world. At least one of my ads has aired every single

day of the year, since I produced my first in 1994.

Tarantino, eat your heart out.

While a partner at Cesari, I produced both the George Foreman Grill infomercial and the very first infomercial for Oxiclean. Many in the Northwest have worked with products that have grown to become trusted household names.

So why is the Northwest such a hotbed of direct response advertising production? Well, the climate and lifestyle attracted a few infomercial pioneers to make their homes here. But what has sustained and increased the industry is the enormous talent of local crews, ready access to the necessary tools, locations, and an attitude of mutual support that runs through the entire advertising and production community.

Talent? My director of photography was nominated for an Academy award for his student film. My gaffer did "Sweet Home Alabama" with Reese Witherspoon, and "Independence Day" with Will Smith. There are about a hundred

other people with similarly impressive experience. They call the Northwest home, but have the same skills as the folks in Hollywood or the Northeast.

Companies such as Seattle Grip & Lighting, Best Grip & Lighting, Victory Studios and Jonas Jensen provide premium equipment and production support for shows big or small. For post-production, we have Flying Spot, Gasworks Post, Clatter & Din and many, many more. The Pacific Northwest has a large pool of passionate, talented individuals for whatever the job entails.

I believe the Northwest production community has developed its own particular brand, one now recognized throughout the world for its innovation, imagination and effectiveness. It's a pleasure and privilege to be part of it. ■

Sean K. Fay is the president and CEO of Envision Response, Inc., a full-service Direct Response advertising agency that specializes in marketing strategy and creative execution for private companies as well as public corporations. Visit [www.envisiontv.com](http://www.envisiontv.com).

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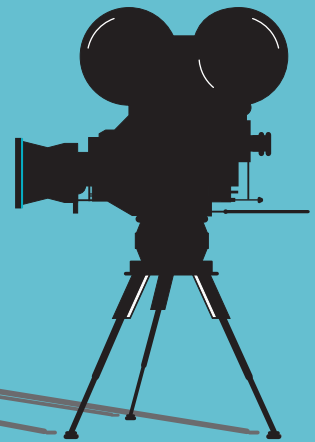
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