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100 Years, Eh?

Bob Liodice, President and CEO, ANA

The ANA is about to begin a year-long celebration to mark our 100th anniversary as a trade association. For us, it's certainly an exciting time. But we recognize that it's really not for many in our business:

- The economy is in disarray and showing just a scant few signs of life
- Advertising and marketing spending is lagging and substantially down from last year
- Industry employment levels are way down, with little sign of recovery
- The government continues to poke its way into so many areas like commercial free speech, product placement, food marketing, behavioral advertising, privacy, pharmaceutical, and more
- Uncertainty abounds



I fundamentally believe that we are poised for a continued renaissance in marketing.

The interesting thing is that we've been through hard times before — and seemingly we climb our way back — and then some. Think of the Great Depression, World War II, the oil embargo years, or the tragedy of 9/11. Somehow, this great industry of ours found its way and continued to grow increasingly healthy and relevant for today's consumers and consumers.

Perhaps I am just an optimist and my vision goes through a lens that is rose colored. But I do fundamentally believe

that we are poised for a continued renaissance in marketing. It will bear no resemblance to anything that we are familiar with — in the same way that the current marketing environment has little in common with the days of *Mad Men*.

So, what will the next decade (or even the next century) of marketing look like? My guesses are that it will:

- Be mass marketing on a one-to-one basis — as marketing becomes personal and conversational
- Be far more efficient with streamlined and digitized business processes
- Be far more effective, laced with enhanced metrics and accountability, improved approaches to integrate media, far more creative that allows for long-term brand building, and far more insightful with decisions based on data and information
- Be more focused on brand building, particularly as companies become empirically focused on calibrating brand value

But we are also stepping into a new era of “responsibility.” Marketers will have to be far more sensitive as to the repercussions of their actions. As it is, we have seen significant strides to be more focused on sustainability, diversity, and social causes. That won't stop — primarily because public policy groups and legislators will be there to remind us just in case we drift away

So, are they rose colored glasses? Perhaps. But they fit me just fine. ■