

WANT TO SELL SOMETHING?
USE AN ALIEN!
A Personal Overview

While the mainstream media keeps sagely informing us that the UFO phenomenon is in decline, it seems that UFO-related advertising is just as much of a money-spinner as ever.



Currently, there are several television advertisements in the UK that utilise UFO/alien imagery to sell their products, such as Alan Sugar's National Savings & Investment commercial, that shows flying saucers 'buzzing' London, or the recent Grolsch beer commercials showing aliens about to abduct a hapless chap until our corporate hero pops up (dressed as a 'Man In Black' no less) and persuades them to abduct a train load of beer instead. Then we had the Volkswagen Beetle ad campaign that proclaimed that the new style 'lovebug' was "back-engineered from UFOs" and the other car advert in which people speak in hushed whispers about how they all saw 'it' in different places at the same time, only to come to the conclusion that "there's more than one out there".

Of course, using science fiction imagery to sell products has been around for decades and with the upsurge in sci-fi's popularity after the release of *Star Wars* in 1977, such motifs were bound to become ever more widespread. Who can forget the Refreshers advert that proclaimed "May The Fizz Be With You", or Toot & Ploot (friendly, green aliens from Venus) going on holiday to Butlins?



One of the earliest brands I can recall seeing that openly used the 'Grey' alien was the corn snack known as Space Raiders. This tasty, pickled onion flavour treat first appeared on the shelves many years ago (long before series such as *The X-Files*, *Roswell* and *Dark Skies* made the Greys popular) and is still available today.



Some might argue that using such imagery is all part of the great drip-

feeding of the public to acclimatise us for 'the truth' (whatever that may be), while others would just say that aliens and UFOs are cool gimmicks and kids love 'em. How kids love National Savings and Dutch lager, though, is another matter! If such advertising campaigns are some part of a larger agenda of disclosure, then I think that they are doing their job nicely. Unless you live in the middle of the Amazon jungle, the chances are that you've seen the face of a Grey somewhere during the course of your day. I warrant that a live Grey could walk down the streets of New York, London or Tokyo and barely be noticed!

For many years, the word 'UFO' came second only to 'sex' as the most searched-for word on the internet (these days, the high scores tend to go to Paris Hilton for some reason, but given her history and appearance, maybe 'UFO' and 'sex' factor into those hits too – apologies to any Paris Hilton fans out there...) and there are literally millions of UFO websites all over the globe.



These days, you can get almost anything with an alien or a flying saucer emblazoned upon it, from T-shirts to lunch boxes to fridge magnets to entire computer systems. Yes, there's a computer company called Alienware that manufacture PC systems aimed at gamers and their logo is the head of a Grey. This also highlights the boom in UFO-related video games that have

appeared on the market recently, with titles such as *Destroy All Humans*, *Area 51* and *UFO: The Aftermath*.



It seems there are few areas in which UFOs have *not* been used as a marketing tool.

Just recently, I came across two news stories on the internet that used the word 'UFO' in their headlines. Neither article was about aliens or UFOs nor were those phrases used in the articles in question at all. One was about a Frisbee competition and the other was about a giant pumpkin! Okay, the Frisbee story could be connected in terms that Frisbees resemble flying saucers, although this was not mentioned in the body of the article, but pumpkins? Sheesh!

While we are constantly being reminded that the UFO subject is the domain of the misinformed, the mistaken or the delusional and that UFO reports are in decline (when the opposite is in fact true), we are constantly being bombarded with UFO imagery in order to sell us any number of products. For a non-existent subject, UFOs certainly have major pulling power!

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