

ADVERTISING STAR



Rocker and Advertiser Herb Gross

[By Robin Salisian]

A lover of all things rock-'n'-roll, Herb Gross, who received his B.S. in both business administration and graphic arts at Rochester Institute of Technology in Rochester, NY, began advertising because "it was the closet career I could find to music in the city I lived in—Rochester, NY." Now, Gross has over 30 years of experience promoting and producing ad campaigns tucked under his belt.

However, beginning was not easy.

"When I started to look for a job in advertising, none of the agencies would hire me," said Gross. "They said I did not have enough experience. I pointed out to them that I had promoted our college rock-'n'-roll band, The Invictas." However, Gross was out of luck. "They would not hire me, so I started my own agency."

Gross' company, Herb Gross & Co., Inc., located in Charlotte, NC, began in 1970 as Nice Day Productions. "I produced a campaign known as "Have a Nice Day." It was a campaign designed to get people to be nice and greet one another in a fun way. [After all], it was 1970."

Today, Herb Gross & Co., Inc. still focuses on being nice but while using multimedia campaigns that include direct-response TV, bill inserts, music production, and radio. And while Gross enjoys creating each campaign, he also thrives on feedback. "I like hearing the response to the campaign," he said. "Did we hit the goals, how many calls were received, etcetera?"

One of Gross' favorite types of campaigns is one that builds a brand and remains consistent

throughout the years. "An example is the Bush Baked Beans campaign. They have fun with their ads and also inform the viewers. Those are the signs of successful advertising."



Q. What do you do for fun?

A. I'm the lead singer of The Invictas, a rock-'n'-roll band (www.theinvictas.com). I have also written a book about the band from the '60s through to today, when the band appeared on the *Today Show*, in *USA Today*, and played with the Beach Boys. There's also a web site www.rocktillyadrop.com. The site is designed to inspire people to follow their dreams and have fun.

Q. What CD is in your CD player right now?

A. The Invictas' Skip-'N-Go-Naked Tour, featuring songs like "The Hump," "Big Caddy Hearse," "One More Time," "Skip 'N Go Naked," and others.

Q. What is the last magazine you read?

A. *US Airways Magazine*.

Q. What is your favorite TV show?

A. *Caps*.

Q. Who is your role model?

A. The Rolling Stones.

And Gross should know successful. Having worked with top clients such as Kodak, Xerox, Sealy, and Thompson Garage Doors, Gross has won numerous awards for his natural-born advertising abilities, including a Worldfest Houston TV Award, a London International Award, Pica Award, and Telly Award, to name a few.

As for the ever-evolving TiVo, Gross foresees the Internet and TiVo becoming one. "The major TV networks will continue to lose share, but they are involved in Internet advertising. The key is for viewers to be able to watch quality TV on their computer."

So what can future advertising students look forward to? Gross tells it like it is. "Don't expect big bucks when you first start and be willing to do whatever the job requires. You must gain experience."

ON THE NET

Herb Gross & Company, Inc.
www.herbgross.com

The Invictas
www.theinvictas.com

Rochester Institute of Technology
www.rit.edu

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