



Truliant Brings 'Word Of Mouth' Marketing To TV Campaign

by *Lauralee Ortiz, Correspondent*

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Truliant Federal Credit Union launched an animated campaign that highlights real members experiencing the credit union difference for themselves, using a whimsical approach.

"These are ads you wouldn't see from a financial institution," said Jan Bullard, brand manager at the \$1.1-billion TFCU. "They are whimsical, lighthearted, fun and real."

Bullard and Ginger Salt, senior vice president of markets at TFCU, said the credit union worked with Jennings advertising agency of Chapel Hill, N.C., to create colorful television, radio and billboard ads that feature real people sharing real stories about how Truliant has helped them with such things as refinancing mortgages and buying vehicles.

The approach combines photography, music, animation and real life film footage taken at the credit union. For example, one radio ad features a member sharing the woes of being a recent college graduate with no money. In the background, a slow, sad opera plays. The music gets faster and more excited as she talks about finding a job and developing a great relationship with Truliant.

One television ad features the cut out head of Tina, a flight attendant. Photos are combined with animated art as she tells the woes of her climbing mortgage rate until she refinanced with Truliant. Her advice: put your seat in the upright position and join Truliant.

"We wanted to create a campaign that portrayed Truliant as it truly is-committed to its members and also fun," Salt said, noting that Truliant demonstrates it on a daily basis by offering such things as hot coffee and a children's area in its branches.

Salt and Bullard said the CU chose the testimonial approach after conducting 460 hours of research that included interviews, in-depth analysis with major constituents of Truliant and focus groups with community members and credit union staff and leadership.

"People said they relate to testimonials," Salt said. "They need loans, they need mortgages and they can relate to other peoples' situations."

Two versions each of radio and television ads along with supporting billboards in bright greens, yellows and purples, began appearing in July and are expected to run through November.

The team said it did not know how much was invested in the campaign, but said it was "very economical" because they used real people rather than paid actors. Salt said the credit union would evaluate membership growth once the campaign has run its course to determine its ROI.

"Our goal was to make more consumers in this market aware that they are eligible to join our credit union," Salt said. "And to convert that awareness into member/owners."



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