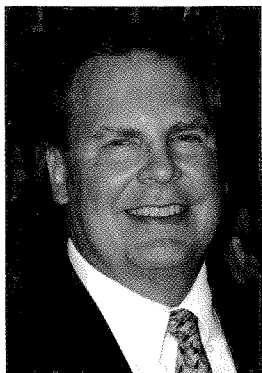


The market is soft — so now what do you do?

Economic uncertainty, unimaginable energy costs, political finger-pointing and constant cable television images of war can make even the most optimistic among us scratch our heads. Many times, this uncertainty can cause companies to arbitrarily slash marketing budgets.



By Greg Smith

A recently issued report quantitatively proves companies that maintained their advertising and marketing budgets in sluggish markets reaped financial and market share benefits as business rebounded. For anyone interested in seeing this report, contact me at greg.smith@bobit.com and I'll be glad to send you a copy.

In the meantime, I'd like to share a story that *Modern Tire Dealer* first printed in 1961. We traced its origins back to 1954, but have not been able to find the identity of the person who first told it.

A man lived by the side of the road and sold hot dogs.
He was hard of hearing so he had no radio.
He had trouble with his eyes so he read no newspapers.
But he sold good hot dogs.

He put up a sign on the highway telling how good they were.
He stood by the side of the road and cried, "Buy a hot dog, Mister."
And people bought.
He increased his meat and roll orders.
He bought a bigger stove to take care of his trade.
He got his son home from college to help him.
But then something happened...
His son said, "Father, haven't you been listening to the radio?
If money stays 'tight,' we are bound to have bad business.
There may be a big depression coming on.
You had better prepare for poor trade."
Whereupon the father thought, "Well, my son has been to college.
He reads the papers and he listens to the radio, and he ought to know."
So the father cut down on his meat and roll orders.
Took down his advertising signs.
And no longer bothered to stand on the highway to sell hot dogs.
And his hot dog sales fell almost overnight.
"You're right, son," the father said to the boy.
"We're certainly headed for a depression."

—Author Unknown