

## Reprint – Survey Results

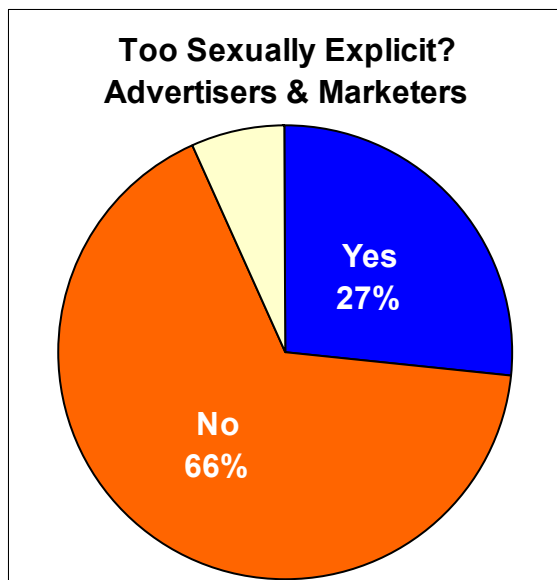
### Are ED Ads Too Sexually Explicit?

By John Mack

Last month we asked Pharma Marketing News readers and browsers to give us their opinions about whether or not recent ED TV ads were too sexually explicit or focusing on a younger and younger audience. We present some of the results here.

While a majority (56%) of respondents did not think the ads were too sexually explicit, a significantly higher percentage of pharma respondents than advertising & marketing professionals outside of pharma thought the ads were too sexually explicit (50% inside pharma vs. 27% outside).

One advertising agency respondent said “The product they are marketing is sex. How should they market the products? I have seen jean ads that were far more explicit...” Other respondents also made comparisons to non-pharma consumer product ads. The point that pharmaceutical products are not like other products (e.g., they can have serious, life-threatening side effects) was not mentioned.



On the other side of the aisle, a respondent commented: “The Viagra commercial featuring regular suburban guys exuberant and dancing to the music of Queen is pure paganism.” Also, “I think the adds [sic] border on advertising drugs for recreational value. Are FDA approved recreational psychoactive pharmaceuticals next? Or are they already here?” and “I think they are irresponsible and absolutely cater to men’s dreams of continually enhanced performance.”

When asked if the ads had any educational value, most respondents gave them a low rating (2.7-2.9 out of 5; 1=very poor, 5=excellent). Some comments: “Minimal education, if any, is offered.” And “Viagra did a lot to make ED less taboo.”

We asked if people thought the ads were targeting men much younger than the demographic likely to be suffering from ED, the approved indication. Of those respondents who answered this question, a clear majority (69%) said yes, while only 15% said no and 15% had no opinion. Some comments: “Of course they are targeting younger men than they need to. If they showed all older or elderly men they wouldn’t get so much buy-in.” And “General rule of thumb is to use spokepeople younger than your target.”

When asked if the ads would be used lawmakers and/or regulators to argue the case for banning or setting new limits on DTC advertising in the US, 84% of respondents said yes or maybe (28% said yes).

Finally, when asked if the brands are being positioned for an eventual OTC status, 47% of respondents said yes, 19% said maybe, and 25% said no. Some comments: “Given they all appear reasonably safe, [they] are ideal candidates for OTC use.” And “Perish the thought!” Probably the best piece of advice heard: “... they better be ready for the consequent litigation.”

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**Pharma Marketing News**


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