

## Pipe Dreams

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### Synopsis

Hyundai Motor Company along with Innocean Worldwide, a marketing and Communications Company, released a video advertisement with the intention of promoting the Tucson iX35 and the automobile's 100% water emissions. The video depicted a man taping a hose to a Hyundai iX35's exhaust pipe into the cabin of the vehicle to commit suicide but failing because the vehicle's emissions were 100% water. The video brought into question the effect of using dark humor in advertisement. This case illustrates the potential negative effect that a promotional campaign can have on a brand, on company reputation and on connecting with customers. In taking the role of Hyundai, students are asked to evaluate the unplanned effect of an advertisement and to develop a response (a possible solution) to the public's negative reactions.

### Learning Outcomes

The outcomes of this case are:

1. Identify risks of using dark humor in advertising.
2. Evaluate the impact of a promotional campaign using an effectiveness model.
3. Identify and evaluate the effects on brand equity after a controversial promotional campaign.
4. Propose responses to limit the negative effect of the suicide advertisement.

### Application

This case is well suited for undergraduate and for graduate courses in Marketing Principles, Advertising (or in Promotions Management), Consumer Behavior, or Marketing Management.

### Key Words

Dark humor, advertising, Keller's Brand Equity Model, AIDA Model

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