

Ad Critique: The "GO Computer Designed for Seniors"

Technology Simplified

Finally...A Computer That's Designed For YOU, Not Your Grandchildren!

...it's easy to read, it's easy to see, it's even easier to understand.

NEW



Just plug it in and GO!!

- Big Bright Screen
- One-Touch Screen Magnification up to 200%
- Large Over-Size Keyboard
- "GO" Button Makes Sure You Never Get Lost
- So simple to set-up and use, There's no need for computer classes or instructional DVD's.
- Customer Service with "Seniors helping Seniors"

Not available in stores!

I know what you're thinking. Another computer ad. Another computer that you'll have to ask your kids and grandkids how to use. You'll hit the wrong button, crash the screen and that will be it. Now the clock is gone. Well, here we got good news for you. This simple-to-use computer was developed and tested by MyCast, the industry leader in making computing easy for seniors. Until now, it was only available in Senior Centers and Retirement Living Communities. Now, for the first time ever, it's available to you.

Easy to use and worry-free. This extraordinary computer comes ready to use right out of the box. All you do is plug it in. Once you're online, the navigation is simple— just press GO! You never get lost or "frozen."

A key part of the Designed for Seniors® GO-Computer is that you never have to worry about maintaining your computer... we do it for you

To see how this amazing computer is improving the day-to-day life of an 80 year old senior, go to www.theGOcomputer.com

Day 1 — My goal is to use Email. Pray for me.

Day 8 — I can send and receive Email — It's a miracle.

Day 24 — I'm using the Internet and making greeting cards.

Day 27 — I've found Party invitations!

Day 29 — I've become addicted to News stories.

worry about spam or viruses. We eliminate and prevent these problems around the clock— for less than seventy five cents per day. Imagine— never having to call your neighbors or relatives or a "repairman" to come "fix" your computer. You never have to worry that your emails, files, or photos will be "lost". And in the unlikely event that your computer does develop a problem we'll send you a replacement absolutely free. And since your data is remotely stored, you'll immediately have access to all of your original emails, files, and photos — instantly. No other computer can do that!

Since it's been created with seniors in mind, the display is easy to read and simple to navigate. All you do is follow the green "GO" button to any place your heart and mind desire. No confusing icons, tool bars, cascading windows, or computer jargon.

Call now for a 30 day home trial. It's a shame that the very people who could benefit most from Email and the Internet are the ones that have the hardest time accessing it. Now, thanks to the GO Computer, countless older Americans are discovering the wonderful world of the Internet every day. Isn't it time you took part? Call now, and a patient, knowledgeable product expert will tell you how you can try it in your home for 30 days. Call today.

designed for SENIORS
GO COMPUTER™

Call now for our special introductory price!
Please mention promotional code 29170.

1-877-725-6443

firstSTREET
THE SENIORS' CHOICE

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www.theGOcomputer.com

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GO ...send and receive emails Keep up with family and friends.

GO ..."surf" the internet Get current weather & news.

GO ...play games online Hundreds to choose from!

Tested for over 8 years in Retirement Living Communities and Senior Centers.

Critiquers: George Duncan, president, Duncan Direct Associates; and **Mike Stakem**, Director of Creative Services, CreatingResults.com

GEORGE DUNCAN:

The overall approach reminds me of the Geico TV ads: “So easy even a caveman can do it.” Then they show the insulted caveman going off in a huff.

Seniors are sensitive to being targeted as seniors -- they could construe this message as “Here’s a computer for you old folks who are too old-fashioned and dense to figure out how to use a regular machine.”

I’d rather see the machine being used by an older person with a testimonial-type comment:

(Picture of Rosemary at the computer):

“Dear Diary: My adventure with the GO Computer has taught me that age is no barrier to new ideas if you have the right equipment. Before I met the GO Computer, I felt like all computers were like foreign languages: extremely difficult to understand. When I discovered how easy GO makes this modern miracle, I became more active in my town and have even reached out to state, national and international issues. Everyone should get a GO and GET CONNECTED!”

That kind of advice is easier to swallow coming from an older person instead of having the ad itself accuse the reader of being dumb. Putting a person into the ad also raises the attention level exponentially, as well as the credibility.

Then the copy can follow on from there:

“Thousands of folks just like Rosemary are discovering the ease of use that firstSTREET’s GO computer is bringing to their daily lives. Tested extensively in senior centers, assisted-living and retirement communities across the country, your GO computer is ready to use right out of the box. No complicated set-up -- just plug it in and GO!

“Here at last is your on-ramp to the great information super-highway designed to let you effortlessly exchange emails and photos with family members.”

Also, the type in the ad is too dense and too small for most older people to read comfortably. Most of them will need their magnifying glasses. The ad should use larger type and less copy broken up into sections with subheads that invites continued reading.

Maybe the only reference to seniors, etc., other than Rosemary, should be a subhead: *Tested for 8 years In Senior Centers and Retirement Communities*, with a paragraph spelling that out.

The bullets in the upper right corner are good. But the mouse in the photo looks a bit too techie to me, like something out of Star Wars. Will they know what a track ball is?

The ad buries three main benefits at the very bottom: *GO* --....*send and receive emails (etc)*. Those should be brought up into the ad, or even into Rosemary's statement:

"Now I send and receive mails and photos with my family with ease. I surf the Internet for news and information, even play games online! My GO computer is a history book, an encyclopedia, an instant source of books and music, newsletters on my interests and more!"

Major flaw: The 30-day trial is almost invisible. That's the offer. It should be headlined and maybe boxed with a picture of a phone next to the 800 number.

I have mixed feelings about the "designed for Seniors" slogan. I'd rather reach for a better way to say it -- like Steve Jobs did with the Mac: "A computer for the rest of us." Unfortunately, that's taken. How about "The no-nonsense computer"? The marketing team should spend some time exploring alternatives.

Also, if Rosemary doesn't work out for whatever reason, or even if she does, I'd test some well-known older personalities as potential spokespersons -- Wilford Brimley? Dick Van Patten? Harrison Ford? You get the idea.

MIKE STAKEM:

To quote firstSTREET®'s GO Computer® ad: *"...created with seniors in mind, the display is easy to read and simple to navigate."*

This ad should reflect this idea! Yet it doesn't.

The headline is good -- to the point, stating what the product is in a few short words. But overall the ad is cluttered, difficult to read, and lacks visual appeal.

The expansive body copy is the biggest turnoff, with badly kerned, justified, body copy and a font size that is small for this target audience. I would suggest that the copy points could be reduced into smaller, more focused sections.

As a whole, the ad lacks white space and visual punch. Give me some breathing room, space for my eye to roam around and explore, and something to look at besides copy! The image should be stronger. The ad is promoting all of the customization, but the image isn't big enough to see the custom features.

While our experience (and a 2009 Nielsen survey) debunks the stereotype of older generations as overly cautious and suspicious of sharing personal information online, I was still somewhat uncomfortable with the idea that firstSTREET® would be storing user

data remotely. This is because the ad does not say how they will guarantee user privacy or security. Our company, Creating Results, tells clients: *Seniors will register if you prove the relevance of your service/offer to their lives, your tool can make their busy lives easier and you show that you're worthy of their trust.* This ad missed an opportunity to show that GO Computer is worthy of our trust.

I did like the tie-in of the "Rosemary's Computer" blog to promote the product. It's a kind of testimonial for the wired age. Social media is quickly proving successful to promote products and companies to matures. However, including so many day-by-day descriptions of how an 80-year-old uses GO Computer in the ad is overkill. The green block placed right in the middle of the first two columns of text makes the copy tight and hard to read. Directing the reader to visit the blog should suffice. Or give that message its own ad.

It took me several readings to find reference to the price in the ad. Though it's hard to find, the language used to convey the (ongoing) cost is effective: "*for less than seventy five cents per day.*" When I peeked at the website, I saw the total costs... This is a good way to treat it.

Email is the No. 1 activity of older Americans, and their online activity is ever-increasing. An easier-to-use computer is a very relevant product for this market. I wish they had created an advertisement that matched the product's tagline... "*designed for SENIORS.*"

Info: George Duncan is a national-award-winning direct-marketing consultant and copywriter and the author of *Streetwise Direct Marketing* (Adams Media, 2001). He can be reached at 603/924-3121, gduncan@pobox.com or www.duncandirect.com. **Mike Stakem**, who specializes in graphic design and Web design at CreatingResults.com, has a retail background and builds high-impact designs for his clients' products and services. He can be reached at mike@creatingresults.com.