

AD-MAKERS URGED TO CONFESS ALL

Author: By JOHN STAPLETON Publication: Sydney Morning Herald
Date: 01/05/1988 Section: News and Features
Words: 446 Page: 8

Advertising executives attending the 31st World Congress of the International Advertising Association at the Opera House this week are being given the opportunity to confess their sins.

The organisation Billboard-Using Graffitists Against Unhealthy Products, commonly known as Buga Up, has provided a confessional box outside the Opera House.

Buga Up, which has kept many a Sydneysider amused over the years by its creative disfigurement of billboards advertising cigarettes and alcohol, has been fairly quiet of late.

It is hoping that its current project will prove the beginning of a spiritual renaissance for the group.

It is utilising the services of Father Smith, alias Mr Lachlan Partridge, who is hoping to convert a few advertisers from their wicked ways.

The Redeem-a-Tiser, as Buga Up has called its confessional box, is designed to let advertisers with a social conscience get it off their chest.

Its promotion goes: "If you need reassurance that your ads don't do any harm, just place a few coins in Father Smith's pocket and he will tell you just what you want to hear. He understands your fear that social responsibility will one day be thrust upon you. He knows how you feel when someone asks you what you do for a living."

Behind this charade is a serious opposition to cigarette and alcohol advertising.

A member of Buga Up, Mr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans, said that advertisers failed to look at the social impact of what they were doing.

"They are liars for hire," he said. "They refuse to use anything other than money as a measure of their success. Is it good to get kids hooked on cigarettes; is it good to get people hooked on credit?"

"We are trying to bring some honesty into advertising, as we have done in the past."