

AGENCY A-LIST

THE ONES TO WATCH

KETCHUM

As marketers are looking for programs that could provide more bang for fewer marketing bucks, Omnicom Group PR firm Ketchum, through its Disruptive Media Group, was doing just that. The group's work for Dr Pepper included buying a spot for \$10,000 that was being auctioned off by a Virginia Beach bride-to-be, and promising to hand out a free soda to everyone in America if Axl Rose completed a long-anticipated Guns N' Roses album by the end of 2008. Together, the stunts managed to generate millions of dollars worth of free media

coverage from outlets ranging from "The Today Show" to the U.K.-based music website NME.com.

With the new group, Ketchum has set itself up to stand out in a time of diminishing marketing budgets and an environment where consumers are often more important to the definition of the brand than the brand's own marketing communications.

Looking to strengthen its tech division, the agency made one of the industry's biggest acquisitions of the year when it bought tech

specialist agency Access Communications, whose 2007 revenues were more than \$14 million. Ketchum also had an impressive year on the new-business front, snatching up a number of major accounts including AMD, Activision Guitar Hero, Bayer, Hertz and Newell Rubbermaid. It also retained all of its top 40 clients in 2008.

Ketchum helped position Häagen-Dazs as an environmentally conscious company with its "Häagen-Dazs Loves Honey Bees" campaign.

-MICHAEL BUSH

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