

## **The New Celebrities: Green Team's Executive Creative Director looks at "Superpower Celebrities," their future and their irony.**

by Jimmiestone

For me, celebrity is the state or quality of being well known or acclaimed. So defined, celebrities can range from Dolly the sheep, to Nelson Mandela, to Paris Hilton. It is not a secret that celebrities can boost sales. It is also well known that David Ogilvy did not like celebrity endorsements, because he believed that consumers would remember the celebrity but not the brand. I agree with that thought. What is the brand of watch and car that Tiger Woods uses? Okay, you know, but it took millions of dollars to achieve that brand recognition.

Counter to the traditional celebrity, a new breed of celebrity is emerging who could eventually change product endorsements. I call them Superpower Celebrities. They have achieved a level of success that allows them to pursue their personal callings (think Bono, Tiger Woods, Angelina Jolie). From global warming, to AIDS, and everything in between, Superpower Celebrities are spreading the word about many crucial issues with credibility and efficiency--while other, not-so-superpowered celebrities are just cashing in on them.

Okay, let's stop the irony and get to the point.

It is just a theory, but I believe that in the very near future, brands will consider the celebrity's cause as part of the image they want to create.

We know that today Rolex uses Tiger because of his clear association with precision. George Clooney could be a Rolex spokesperson as well, but if he continues down the path of a Superpower Celebrity, it could become very hard for Rolex to overcome the irony that their spokesperson is wearing a \$10,000 watch in the middle of Darfur .

With the world in a state of near-chaos--global warming, genocide in Sudan, war, hunger, AIDS, poverty--we need all the help we can find, and celebrities have a role, but we have to be careful with celebrity oversaturation. And when Jessica Simpson and Lindsay Lohan support a cause--any cause--and Hollywood publicists are looking for the new fad photo ops, celebrity endorsement runs the danger of becoming irrelevant.

By the way, Tiger is not a spokesperson for Rolex (his watch endorsement is with Tag Heuer). If you caught that, congratulations. If not, it shows that, even with a Superpower Celebrity, David Ogilvy may have had a point.