



The Truth about Patents and Video in Print Advertising (VPA)

THE ISSUE

VPA (video delivered in brochures, cards and point of purchase executions) has become one of today's most popular marketing platforms; offering break-through impact, digital content delivery and opportunities to drive on-line connections with customers and prospects. However, few people know that VPA has been around for a while. Consider that here at Structural Graphics, we produced our first video project more than five years ago!

As more companies offer VPA capabilities, some are inferring a broader scope of their patent protection than is actually included in the patents registered with the patent offices in the United States and other countries. This can make it daunting to navigate through what is patented and what is not and it can be very confusing. As a result, some marketers have simply avoided using VPA due to questions or concerns related to patents. That's a shame - leaving one of today's most powerful marketing platforms on the sidelines.

THE FACTS

One common myth is that VPA as a concept or product is covered by some far reaching patent. Not true. In fact, VPA as a product category is not patented or even patentable. There are a handful of patents that do exist regarding specific aspects or claims (as the Patent Office likes to call them) in the VPA category. For example, one patent features a claim that when you open a brochure and turn the pages, the video screen embedded inside skips to another chapter automatically as you move through the multiple pages. Very clever, but it doesn't cover a VPA brochure that turns on automatically when opening to one presentation. It doesn't cover touch screen executions. It doesn't cover push button activations. In short, the vast majority of video screen configurations available today are not covered under any patent, nor can they be.

HOW CAN WE HELP?

Structural Graphics is constantly monitoring patent activity in the VPA space and has had all existing patents reviewed by our legal counsel. As a result, we have developed a clear understanding of what is patented and what is not. We are happy to review these facts with you on your VPA project or idea. Structural Graphics has produced thousands of VPA pieces for scores of major clients over the past five years without a single legal scrape, stumble or bruise. In fact, take a look at our VPA product gallery and see for yourself at www.structuralgraphics.com/VPA and be sure to review our VPA Tips for Success.

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