Business News 09 INT - Reebok Launches Ad Campaign

Before we listen to the article we’re going to do a quick introduction to some of the key words you will hear. If you’re listening to this podcast on an iPod or computer you can also view the slide show by selecting “Show Artwork” in the “View” menu in iTunes.

1. **launched** - to release a new product
2. **ad campaign** – a campaign is an organized series of activities and Ad is short for advertising.
3. **motivate** – to get people interested in something
4. **swipe** – a take a hit at something or, in the context of the article, to make fun of something.
5. **slogan** – a short memorable phrase used to promote a product
6. **strategy** – a plan or approach intended to achieve a major aim or goal
7. **compete/competitors** – to compete means to try and win a game or to gain an advantage and the competitors are other companies that Reebok is competing against
8. **purportedly** – to claim to do or say something
9. **ties** - connections
10. **celebrity endorser** – a famous person who publicly promotes a product.
Reebok launches new ad campaign

Reebok has launched a new US$30m marketing campaign in the US called "run easy".

The campaign is to motivate runners to have fun with their exercise, according to reports.

According to USA Today, one of the company's poster ads takes a swipe at Nike's "Just Do It" slogan with the message "What are you just doing? Run easy."

"Our job is not to put Adidas and Reebok in a strategy to compete against each other but to find a strategy in which they can fight side by side against all other competitors," Reebok marketing chief Uli Becker told USA Today.

He also purportedly said that another goal of the campaign was to re-establish Reebok's ties with the female market.

The campaign includes video and online resources, posters and billboards, and TV ads featuring celebrity endorsers such as the NBA's Allen Iverson, footballer Thierry Henry and track athlete Carolina Kluft.

Vocabulary

1. launched (verb: to launch)
   The article begins with several mentions of a word we've covered a couple of times already - the verb to launch. Do remember the meaning of to launch something when we use it to talk about marketing? That’s right, it means to introduce a new product or service with the support of advertising and publicity.

   Example:
   Microsoft launched Vista, it’s new operating system, at the beginning of 2007.

2. marketing campaign (Noun – collocation)
   Usually when a company launches a new product they will organize a marketing campaign to help promote it to the public. Campaign is a word we’ve borrowed from the military. It refers to a series of planned activities.

   If we look back of the title of this news story there’s also another good example of the use of campaign – ad campaign. This is short for advertising campaign – so this would be a series of planned advertisements intended to promote the product.

   We talked quite a lot about marketing in Video Vocab 03. Can you remember some of the other words that marketing is often used with? How about marketing plan? This is the special plan a company uses to organize its marketing campaigns. Or how about marketing manager? That’s the person in charge of a company’s marketing.
3. **motivate** (verb)
So if a company launches a marketing campaign they are usually trying to motivate consumers, or the public, to buy their product. To motivate means to encourage someone to do something.

In the example we have in today’s article, Reebok is trying to motivate runners to ‘have fun with their exercises’. By making runners think of having fun when exercising, Reebok hopes to encourage them, or motivate them, to buy their products.

4. **poster ads** (noun)
One of the ways a company advertises its products is with poster ads. A poster is a large printed picture and ad is short for advertisement, so a **poster ad** is a large printed picture used to advertise a product. We can see poster ads everywhere – on the sides of buses and trains, in offices and shops, and even huge poster ads that cover entire buildings. If the poster ad is fixed to a large board so that it can be displayed by the side of a road, we call it a **billboard**.

5. **swipe** (noun)
When used as a verb, swipe means to try and hit something. In the article it says Reebok is taking a swipe at Nike’s “Just Do It” campaign. Note the strong collocation here: **To take a swipe at something**. In this case **swipe** is being used as a noun meaning to take a hit at Nike’s popular slogan. So Reebok is really making fun of Nike’s more serious slogan.

6. **slogan** (noun)
A slogan is a short, memorable phrase used to advertise a product. Nike’s slogan is “Just Do It” and now Reebok has introduced a new competing slogan, “Run Easy”. What’s your favorite slogan?

7. **strategy** (noun)
Here’s another word that is often used when taking about marketing – **strategy**. The noun **strategy** refers to a plan of action or a policy designed to achieve a major aim or objective. So Reebok’s strategy is to compete against other sporting goods manufacturers but not its sister company, Adidas.

*Example:* The company’s strategy is to expand into developing markets in Africa and the Middle East.

8. **compete** (verb)
To compete is a verb meaning to try to gain or win something, usually a competition, against others who are trying to do the same thing. We often use compete when talking about sports and it’s also commonly used in business to mean the act of trying to sell more products or do better than other companies in the same market.

9. **competitors** (noun)
Competitors are people competing, or fighting, against each other to win a game or competition. In the context of the article, Reebok’s competitors are all the other
companies, such as Nike, Puma or New Balance, that make and sell similar products.

Example:
*Competition was really fierce but the company overcame its competitors with a new sales strategy.*

10. **purportedly** (adverb)

Purportedly is an adverb that comes from the verb *purport*, meaning to claim to say or do something. So the writer is claiming that Reebok’s marketing chief said another **goal**, or aim, of the campaign is to promote Reebok to the female market. *Quite a strange use of ‘purportedly’ – this word often implies that there is some question as to whether the person actually made the statement, so it’s a little weird to see it in a news report which we assume is just reporting the facts – but who knows?*

11. **ties** (noun)

In fact he’s quoted as saying Reebok wants to ‘re-establish their ties to the female market’. To **re-establish** means to make a connection again with something and **ties** is a noun used to refer to a connection or relationship with something. So we can conclude from this statement that Reebok wants to re-build their connections with the female sports market, a market in which Reebok must have previously been a strong competitor.

12. **celebrity endorsers** (noun collocation)

We finish off today with another good collocation that we talked quite a bit about in our last business news podcast: **celebrity endorser**. Remember that celebrity is just another word for a famous person and an endorser is someone who shows public support for something. So a celebrity endorser is a famous person a company has paid to publicly support its products.

And we’ll finish off with our celebrity endorser Mitch Breece wishing you all …. 