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Study Concludes 28% of Television Commercials Feature Toll-free Numbers as Direct Response Mechanism

74% of Toll-free Numbers Use 800 Prefix-The Original Toll-Free

(Burlington, VT) According to a recent study, the use of toll-free phone numbers in television advertising continues to grow, proving that the telephone remains prevalent as a response tool despite growth of the Internet over the past seven years.

The *2005 Toll-free Numbers in Television Advertising* study concludes that 35% of all television commercials feature phone numbers, and that 82% of those phone numbers are toll-free. Furthermore, 74% of the toll-free numbers in television ads use the 800 prefix, making 800 numbers the leading toll-free prefix. Finally, of the 800 numbers 61% are vanity, such as 800-NEXT-CALL.

A similar study conducted in 1998 concluded that 25% of TV commercials displayed toll-free numbers, and at that time just 55% were vanity 800 numbers. Overall, the 2005 study proves vanity 800 phone numbers are increasingly prevalent in today's television ads, up approximately 6%, and the 800 prefix remains the leader as a direct response tool. Additionally, in 1998 only 19% of television commercials included an Internet address, whereas today a URL is included in 51% of television commercials.

"Over the last seven years advertisers continue to understand that using a unique and memorable mechanism in television advertisements increases their response rates when featured in advertising. The two TV studies over the past seven years prove that 800 toll-free and vanity number usage in advertising is still strong, and growing, at 28%, up from 25%. The 2005 study also shows that advertisers continue to provide their customers with phone numbers so they can make contact with a live person, notwithstanding the spectacular growth of the Web," says Mitchell Knisbacher, President of 800response, which commissioned the *2005 Toll-free Numbers in Television Advertising* study.

Paris Ford[®], located in Paris, TX, was using a numeric toll-free number in their advertising efforts for one year, but did not receive as many calls as they hoped. “We were using a toll-free number, but it was not a vanity. People could not remember our numeric phone number when it was mentioned in ads, and we were not getting the number of phone calls we expected,” says Jay Jaynes, General Manager of the dealership. After activating a vanity number, the dealership saw call volume increase by 60% in just four months.

The 2005 study also measures usage of the three alternate toll-free prefixes in use today, including 866, 877 and 888. These toll-free prefixes come in far behind the 800 prefix for usage in television advertising, 6%, 8% and 12% respectively.

“Vanity 800 numbers come with many benefits for marketers – they are easy to remember for consumers, and they are easy to track and record, which helps marketing executives measure advertising campaign effectiveness,” Knisbacher goes on to say.

Toll-free 800 numbers are increasingly hard to find, particularly 800 vanity numbers. In the 1980’s the inventory of 800 phone numbers became depleted, hence the introduction of 866, 877 and 888 toll-free exchanges. Today, vanity 800 numbers – the crown jewels of toll-free – are available through companies like **800response**.

About the Study – 2005 Toll-free Numbers in Television Advertising.

A total of 5,524 television commercials from four networks in four major markets make up the sample size and represent television commercials on a national scale. Independent contractors taped, reviewed and collected data required for the analysis. The commercials denote various times of day and days of week in national and local advertising markets. Commercials monitored are from a cross-section of over 20 industries, including auto, lodging, pharmaceutical, and more. For a complete report of study findings please visit www.800response.com or send your request to jlandau@800response.com.

800response is the premier provider of vanity 800 service and offers the broadest selection of Custom 800 numbers available today. Services include a sophisticated Call Routing platform, Call Recording, and real-time Call Tracking reports that provide invaluable demographic information to our customers. For more information visit www.800response.com or call 1-800-NEW-SALES.