

A Curious Mint brings Students to a Curious Event

Tuscaloosa-- At a “Curiously Strong Event” students learned how “A Curiously Strong Mint” proved advertising was jetting forward full throttle.

Steffan Postaer, former chairman and chief creative officer for Euro RSCG Worldwide, addressed more than 200 students Oct. 13 in the College of Communication and Information Sciences at the University of Alabama. Postaer said he came to prove that advertising is not a dying profession and he did this while making the audience laugh. Postaer made it clear that he loved his job.

“It is the most fun you can have with your clothes on,” Postaer said.

Going into detail on the Altoids campaign he worked on, Postaer said they had no money and even less time to promote the mints. If they did not succeed then Kraft would drop the mint. Using print advertising, Postaer and colleagues were able to make the mint the number one mint in the United States.

“Ask yourself what’s this products curious strength,” Postaer said.

With that they advertised on tug boats, smoke towers and rickshaws. They promoted their more recent product of Altoids chewing gum on a train and had the phrase “chew chew” on it.

Because of the campaign, Postaer said he was able to understand how valuable print media is. People even stole the posters that were made to advertise for Altoids. The posters would have a strong man on it saying “nice Altoids” or a man in space. It all kept with the theme of the person’s curious strength. Having these posters stolen was viewed as a success by the advertising team he said.

“Get down on your knees and praise God ‘cause that never happens,” Postaer said. “The hair on the back of my neck rose.”

Students were intrigued by Postaer; as they took in jokes their shoulders were jumping up and down. Lauren Shell was one of the students laughing at a comment.

“I really like how he interacted with the audience,” Shell said. “He wasn’t just a boring fixture, he made it fun.”

Most members of the audience were not aware at how effective print media was in an advertising campaign.

Kirby Dykstra, a student in the College of Communication and Information Sciences said that she did not realize how good it is to use traditional media compared to modern technology until she listened to Postaer.

“Advertising is evolving toward people and not away,” Postaer said. “Nothing catches people better than open advertising where they work and play.”