

# THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

WELCOME JeffreyFlem... | Log Out

My Account Messages Preferences

As of Tuesday, April 29, 2008

Set My Home Page | Customer Service

News Today's Newspaper My Online Journal Multimedia & Online Extras Markets Data & Tools Classifieds

- Home
- News
- Technology
- Markets
- Personal Journal
- Opinion
- Leisure
- Travel
- Small Business
- Autos
- Careers
- Education
- Real Estate
- SmartMoney

TODAY'S NEWSPAPER MY ONLINE JOURNAL

Special Offer  
Subscribe to the print Journal today and receive 8 weeks FREE!  
Click Here!

**LA CENSE BEEF**  
Healthier Beef = Healthier Meals.  
Free Burgers!

- Advertiser Links
- A WSJ Quarterly Fund Analysis, presented by Janus
  - Weigh in on the Retirement Debate! Presented by WSJ & Allstate
  - Employee Benefits

## PAGE ONE

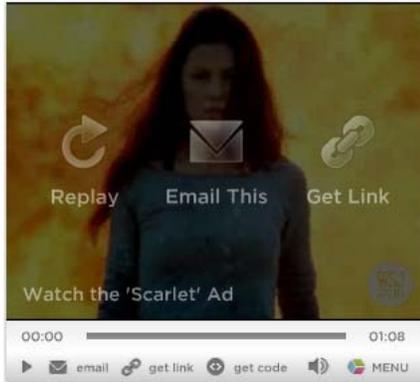
### New to the TV Lineup: A Flat-Panel Teaser

LG Uses Ruse of Show To Market Its Screen; Seeing Red on 'Scarlet'?

By SUZANNE VRANICA  
April 29, 2008; Page B6

On Monday night, about 500 people planned to gather at the Pacific Design Center in Hollywood for a swanky screening of "Scarlet," a new TV series from director David Nutter that stars Natassia Malthe.

It looked like a standard new-show screening, right down to the 32-foot-long red carpet and Wolfgang Puck catering. But the event, part of a \$100 million global advertising and marketing campaign for LG Electronics, was actually an elaborate ruse. Attendees were expecting a screening of a new TV series called "Scarlet," but "Scarlet" was in fact "a new series of TVs" with a red back panel.



Watch a clip from the "Scarlet" ad campaign.

The marketing hoax is an attempt by the South Korean electronics company to overcome the commoditization of the television business. TV manufacturers are under the gun to develop brands that stand for something, as a way to avoid consumers choosing their flat panels based on who has the lowest price.

"It's a big challenge for TV makers," said Kwan-Sup Lee, vice president of brand marketing at LG Electronics. "This is a high-tech product but the retail price is going down, and for TV makers there is little chance to make profit in this business." Sony recently has sparked a TV price war in the U.S.

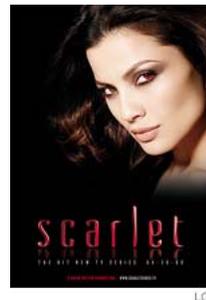
Making matters worse is advertising in the TV category is a sea of sameness, branding experts said, with most flat-panel makers claiming the best picture quality with ads that spout a slew of technology jargon.

Mr. Lee said the hardest part of the campaign was selling it internally. LG is in many ways a traditional Korean company, he said, and doing something this outrageous wasn't part of its DNA. The effort is a contrast to LG's last campaign, which relied largely on run-of-the-mill in-store sales and promotions that played up picture quality. The "Scarlet" ads are LG's largest-ever campaign for a single product, Mr. Lee said.

LG's premiere-like event was the culmination of a three-month global viral-marketing effort to promote the fake TV show. For the past few weeks, a teaser commercial for "Scarlet" has been running on TV and online, with no mention of LG. The action-packed trailer features Ms. Malthe, a slinky brunette, in several action scenes, including one in which she crashes through a plate-glass window and uses her karate skills against four masked men. "Things aren't always what they seem," a voice-over chimes in at the end of the ad.

As part of the public-relations plan for the show, LG has had Ms. Malthe drum up publicity by attending red-carpet events, including Fashion Week in New York, the Bafta awards in London (the British equivalent of the Oscars), and several film premieres in Los Angeles. The result: plenty of online, TV and magazine stories about "Scarlet."

A story in the City Times in Kuwait carried the headline: "Sexy Natasha Malthe to star as title role in renowned Hollywood director David Nutter's new project titled: Scarlet." Even IMDB, the Internet movie-database site, includes a mention of "Scarlet," a "TV miniseries," under Mr. Nutter's bio.



A print ad for "Scarlet" doesn't mention LG.

EMAIL PRINT MOST POPULAR

YAHOO! BUZZ DIGG THIS

GET RSS FEEDS advertisement

surf snap speak  
Get a LG camera phone  
Get One Now  
Two-year agreement and other restrictions apply  
at&t

#### TODAY'S MOST POPULAR

1. He's Seen It All, Doesn't Like What He Sees
2. Opinion: The Great Divider
3. Ex-Fed Official Blasts Bear Deal
4. Fiorina Follows McCain's Lead
5. How to Destroy Brand-New Cars

MORE

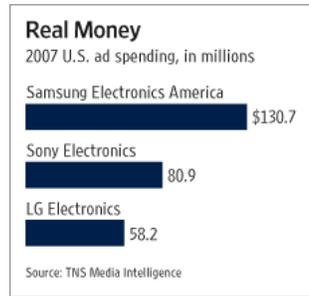
#### PEOPLE WHO READ THIS...

- Also read these stories:
- Airlines Address Long Waits -- Sort Of
  - How to Destroy Brand-New Cars
  - Struggling With Obsolete Technologies
  - Blockbuster in Talks for TV Stake
  - Davenport Resists Flood Wall as River Swells

NEW! Are you on Facebook? See what content on this site is popular with your friends! Learn more >

Your Facebook Friends Are Reading

The clues have left many people scouring the Web and replaying the trailer to find clues about the show -- and some have figured out the joke. Pulling a fast one on the public can be a dangerous move, some ad experts said. "People are going to be p--- off," said Alan Siegel, chairman and chief executive of Siegel + Gale, a New York branding firm. Some consumers already are expressing anger. "If this is true, LG screwed up because I will be so mad that I would never buy their TV," wrote someone who identifies herself as "Amanda" on a Yahoo Answers message board.



Still, LG said it is worth taking the chance. "I'm taking this risk to be different," said Mr. Lee at LG. "If you go to Best Buy, you can't tell the difference between any of the TVs; even to me, I cannot tell which is LG. They all look the same."

LG, the third-largest flat-panel maker behind Samsung Electronics and Sony, needs to get more bang for its ad buck because its rivals have been spending far more on marketing. "We can't go head to head with Sony on media spending so we need to amplify our spend," said Chan Suh, chief executive of Agency.com, the Omnicom Group-owned firm that helped craft the ad effort.

Sony Electronics shelled out \$80.9 million for ad time in the U.S. last year, while Samsung topped \$130 million, according to TNS Media Intelligence. By contrast, LG Electronics spent \$58 million. And LG doesn't have nearly the brand recognition that its rivals have.

Beginning Tuesday, LG will air a new version of its ad from Mr. Nutter, which reveals that Scarlet is a new line of TVs.

Write to Suzanne Vranica at [suzanne.vranica@wsj.com](mailto:suzanne.vranica@wsj.com)

Sponsored Links

**Debt Relief Options**

Relieve the burden of debt without filing bankruptcy. Learn how. [debtreliefoptionsfas.guideq.com](http://debtreliefoptionsfas.guideq.com)

**Buy Stock with Scottrade**

\$7 Online Stock Trades, Unlimited Shares. Fast Web Site. [www.Scottrade.com](http://www.Scottrade.com)

**AARP Auto Insurance.**

Save Money On Auto Insurance In Minutes w/ The Hartford. Free Quotes! [AARP.TheHartford.com](http://AARP.TheHartford.com)

**RELATED ARTICLES FROM ACROSS THE WEB**

Related Web News

- 'Secret' of 'Scarlet' revealed: It's a TV, not a show [Apr. 29, 2008](#) [boston.com](#)
- 'Secret' of 'Scarlet' revealed [Apr. 29, 2008](#) [boston.com](#)

More related content

Powered by Sphere

- [EMAIL THIS](#)
- [FORMAT FOR PRINTING](#)
- [MOST POPULAR](#)
- [ORDER REPRINTS](#)
- [DIGG THIS](#)
- [GET RSS FEEDS](#)

[Return To Top](#)

**WSJ Digital Network:**

[MarketWatch](#) | [Barrons.com](#)  
[AllThingsDigital](#) | [Dow Jones News Alerts](#) | [MORE](#)

[Log Out](#) [Contact Us](#) [Help](#) [Email Setup](#) [My Account/Billing](#) [Customer Service: Online](#) | [Print](#)  
[Privacy Policy](#) [Subscriber Agreement & Terms of Use](#) [Copyright Policy](#) [Mobile Devices](#) [RSS Feeds](#)  
[News Licensing](#) [Advertising](#) [About Dow Jones](#)  
 Copyright © 2008 Dow Jones & Company, Inc. All Rights Reserved



**Life After Barry a Strikeout for Some**  
 Seen by 9 friends | 2 groups | Chicago

**Bush Touts Coming Tax Rebates**  
 Seen by 6 friends | Investment Banking | San Francisco

**He's Seen It All, Doesn't Like What He Sees**  
 Seen by 2 friends | Day Traders | New York

Provided by **SeenThis** by looma

**COMPANIES**

Dow Jones, Reuters

**Sony Corp. ADS (SNE)**

PRICE 45.64  
 CHANGE -0.28  
 9:58a.m.

**Sony Corp. ADS (SNE)**

PRICE 45.64  
 CHANGE -0.28  
 9:58a.m.

\* At Market Close

**RELATED INDUSTRIES**

- [Media & Marketing](#)

**Personalized Home Page Setup**

Put headlines on your homepage about the companies, industries and topics that interest you most.

