

Burson's Proof unit launches Fix the Debt ad campaign

Virgil Dickson

November 16, 2012

WASHINGTON: Burson-Marsteller subsidiary Proof Integrated Communications has launched a massive campaign for the Fix the Debt organization.

The campaign includes images that are parody recreations of well-known advertising slogans with taglines like “I’m fixin’ it,” “Got debt?” and “Just fix it.”

“We tried to invoke iconic advertising of recognizable brands to make the connection that even the best advertising in the world isn’t going to fix the debt,” said Michael Bassik, CEO of Proof.

The group launched the campaign as lawmakers and President Barack Obama are attempting to avoid the “fiscal cliff,” which would kick in January 1, 2013, without a budget agreement. If no deal is reached, payroll tax cuts would expire and significant funding decreases for federal programs would take place.

The firm was hired after a competitive pitch process.

“I would say Proof understands the mission and goals of the campaign, but more than anything it understands collaboration is key to having a successful campaign,” said Jon Romano, the CCO for Fix the Debt. “We believe they are doing great work and will help to move this debate in a positive direction.”

The campaign will largely target the DC area, though future iterations of the effort will use images of regular people to show lawmakers that constituents also want a bi-partisan deal to take place, Bassik said.

His firm [relied in part](#) on Fix the Debt's PR agency partners DCI Group, Glover Park Group, and Dewey Square Group to do research for the campaign and to find average citizens.

The Fix the Debt group has raised more than \$40 million over the last few years and at least \$1 million has been allocated to fund the outreach effort, Romano said.

Mindful that lawmakers are aware of the December 31 deadline, the aim of the campaign is to warn of the consequences of not making a deal and the opportunities there are to achieve one, Bassik said.

Johanna Schneider, MD of Burson's DC office, said this is the biggest public policy campaign she has seen in some time.

It also includes full-page ads in *The Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Hill*, *Roll Call*, *Politico*, and *National Journal*.

“Urgency is the key message; both sides need to come together and fix the debt,” Schneider said. “We're trying to get the attention of Congress and thought leaders in DC, and we will stay on it until we get an agreement.”

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80 CEOs lend names to 'Fix the Debt' project

[Virgil Dickson](#)

October 26, 2012

WASHINGTON: The Fix the Debt organization has brought together the CEOs of more than 80 US corporations, such as Delta Airlines, Goldman Sachs, and Microsoft, to urge Congress to pass legislation to reduce the federal deficit.

Campaign organizers have raised more than \$30 million to boost awareness. Promotional efforts include social and traditional media outreach, grassroots mobilization, and a paid media component. DCI Group, Glover Park Group, and Dewey Square Group are supporting the campaign.

The chief communicator behind the initiative ...