



Coke Turns to Webisodes to Entice Millennials to Nestea

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Coca-Cola Co.'s Nestea brand is the sole sponsor of a series being released this summer that, on the face of it, seems routine. The series has experienced actors and an award-winning director. It's set in an office environment, a familiar backdrop for primetime shows.

But don't look for this show, titled "CTRL," on TV. And don't look for Nestea commercial breaks before or during the program. "CTRL" is part of a new slate of Webisodes delivered exclusively through digital outlets — Internet sites, video on demand and gaming consoles. And Nestea isn't part of the credits; it's part of the story.

The Webisode fits well with Nestea's goal of winning over millennials, 18- to 34-year-olds, said Annis Lyles, vice president of media and interactive for Coca-Cola North America.

This form of "branded entertainment," or product appearances, has been growing for years on TV and likely will grow on the Internet, said Dean DeBiase, chief executive officer of TNS Media, a New York firm that tracks ad spending. "It's another way in a very crowded advertising space to elegantly place products in programming," DeBiase said.

Webisodes create new opportunities for advertisers because they can have interactive features, such as links to online games, that further drive home the company's message, DeBiase said.

"The difference between branded entertainment on TV and branded entertainment on the Web is that it can be much more dynamic," he said.

They also have one major attraction for media companies. "This is another way to solve the question: How do you make money on the Internet?" DeBiase said.