

Financial Times posters urge firms not to cut ad spend in economic downturn

Mark Sweney

Friday October 17 2008 15.24 BST

The Financial Times is to launch an ad campaign featuring billboards stripped almost bare to question the wisdom of slashing advertising budgets in the economic downturn.

The billboard campaign, developed by ad agency DDB London, breaks across London on Monday.

A series of specially commissioned billboard sites have been created to look as if they have been stripped back to bare boards, with just a small panel of FT-branded copy in the top corner.

Copy in the ad asks the question "Global downturn. What's the first mistake businesses make?".

The campaign, which directs consumers to the website ft.com/budgets, aims to spark debate about why companies often respond to an economic slump by slashing marketing budgets.



With the posters, the FT is suggesting that companies that keep up their spending on ads take market share from rivals and grow quicker when the economic outlook improves.

"This new creative could not be more topical and supports the argument that cutting back on advertising spend in

recessionary or turbulent times hands a significant advantage to your competitors," said the FT's global marketing director, Frances Brindle.

"There is considerable evidence to suggest that companies that continue to invest in advertising in tough times emerge stronger than those that don't."

The campaign will also run in the trade press and the FT's campaign website will contain case studies that show the benefits of continuing to advertise during a slump.

Next week's ad campaign forms part of the newspaper's "We live in Financial Times" marketing strategy.