

The ARF Uses ChatGPT to Summarize and Reinterpret Erwin Ephron's 152 Newsletters

Book to be sold as part of a fundraiser for the ARF Workforce Initiative for Diversity and Excellence

NEW YORK, NY (December 15, 2023) – The ARF (Advertising Research Foundation) today released a new book, entitled “WOW: The Wit and Wisdom of Erwin Ephron,” featuring a compilation of 152 newsletters from Erwin Ephron that were summarized and reinterpreted by ChatGPT 4.0. This book will be available in hardcover or digital format, and is being offered as part of a fundraiser for the ARF Charitable Foundation’s Workforce Initiative for Diversity and Excellence (WIDE).

As an industry leader in the development of modern media planning, Ephron wrote the newsletters from 1993-2010, presenting complex subjects in their simplest form. To reflect Erwin’s importance during the Winter of AI, the late 1990’s into the new millennium, ChatGPT 4.0 was asked to summarize each newsletter in a paragraph or two, and then to reinterpret his comments in light of the media environment today.

“Few technologies have had as an immediate impact as ChatGPT and AI have had on the advertising industry,” said Paul Donato, Chief Research Officer at ARF. “It has entered every facet of the industry and will continue to play a major role in how advertising creative is generated and developed over the coming years. Ever the innovator, Erwin was ahead of his time when it came to thinking about the role of technology in advertising. By utilizing this transformative technology to bring Erwin’s words to life for a new generation, his innovative spirit lives on and will only help the next wave of advertisers as they navigate our changing advertising landscape.”

The ARF segmented the book into three broad sections: advertising, planning and measurement. Subsections include advertising strategies, audience engagement and behavior, media planning strategies, and media metrics and measurement.

For instance, on the topic of advertising amid potential economic downturns, ChatGPT reinterpreted Erwin’s initial newsletter on balancing budgets during a recession into how the challenges and vulnerabilities of the advertising industry during economic recessions have multiplied due to the diversified marketing channels now available to advertisers.

Donato continued: “As you’re reading, you will find that ChatGPT repeatedly reinterpreted Erwin’s thoughts as ‘even more relevant today’. Because many of Erwin’s letters dealt with the growing complexities as the industry transitioned to digital, Chat thought it even more relevant as the environment is far more complex in 2023 than when Erwin originally wrote his letters.”

Since Ephron’s death, his family has provided The ARF with the complete collection of The Ephron Letters. The ARF wishes to thank Erwin’s family for granting permission to publish his newsletters and create this compendium.

For more information or to contribute to ARF WIDE by purchasing the book, please visit <https://thearf.org/about-the-arf/wide-workforce-initiative-for-diversity-and-excellence-wow/>

About The ARF

Founded more than 80 years ago, the ARF is dedicated to creating, curating, and sharing objective, industry-level advertising research to enable members to make a true impact on their advertising and build marketing leadership within their organizations. It has more than 400 members from leading brand advertisers, agencies, research firms and media-tech companies. For more information, visit www.thearf.org.