

## NEW LEVI'S AD TELLS YOUTH: YOU WANT TO TAKE ON THE WORLD, WEAR LEVI'S



Levi Strauss has a new mantra for the young men and women, who against all odds are not willing to compromise and with steely determination and self-belief hope to change the world. The annual fall campaign for the Levi jeans sold by Levi Strauss & Company, will give the dreams and aspirations of the youth an self-assured push with their assertive theme "Go Forth." For this year's campaign the company is adding a second theme to add some marketing in the mix: "This is a pair of Levi's." The new campaign combines both philosophy and a sales pitch. In the spot, dressing is shown as an elaborate and careful ritual, like putting on an armor to get ready for battle. The minute long commercial will appeal to people of all ages, especially between 18 and 34 years. On the screen appear images of determined and stern looking young men and women dressing and heading out to start their day with purpose and grit and an echoing female voiceover says, "This is a pair of Levi's, buttons and rivets and pockets and cuffs, and the thread that holds it together. When the road gets rough and the sky gets jumpy and the stars start falling on top of your head and the waves start breaking against your legs," the announcer continues, "it's the thread in your seams that's tied to your dreams." Incidentally the spot is titled "thread" As you see the youthful boys and girls striding out to their work, the narrator concludes saying, "You follow your heart, follow the leader, you're the leader." "Are you joking, are you breaking, are you shaking? You're the next living leader of the world. You're a kid. Holding onto the thread. That holds it together. This is a pair of Levi's." At that point, a Twitter hashtag, "#GoForth," appears. Len Peltier, Vice President and Global Creative Director for the Levi's brand at Levi Strauss & Company in San Francisco said that campaign is about "the empowerment of the ritual of getting dressed in the morning and choosing your path." However, he admitted that even though the campaign is about recognizing the youth and giving them their due, it is also important that we talk about the product, otherwise the ads "can get a little too ethereal or esoteric," he feared. It does seem a little ironic that we have a campaign that celebrates youth accomplishments when youth unemployment is at an all time high. Mr. Peltier agrees that the ad does tread a fine line between being "perennially optimistic" and being "honest and authentic with our consumers." The basic aim of the campaign is to inspire and encourage the youth, asking them that inspite of all odd, go forth, you have it in you to overcome and do it for yourselves. Andrew Schafer, global account director at Wieden & Kennedy says that we are trying to tell that with Levi's there is nothing that cannot be achieved, everything becomes possible. He says that the campaign "encourages youth to get up every day and make their collective worlds better. It is about making their way in a world that's uncertain, but on the bright side, it's theirs to create." So you don't have a job are working in one that you don't like, courtesy the terrible job market and an economy that is nothing to write home about. There's nothing to fret or panic about. Just throw on a pair of jeans and your ready for the world. That's the essential not too realistic message that the ad wants to convey. The brand says that they based the ad on a survey that revealed that the youth of today believe, that whatever the circumstances it was up to them to make a make a positive difference in the world." It is very difficult to merge being idealist and being fashionable at the same time and trying to merge the two can be rather hard. When the voiceover is admonishing the youth, don't give up, keep persevering. "You're gonna be great, you're gonna be great, you're gonna be great," somehow, the depressing employment scenario makes it sound less than convincing - the thread , even though brilliantly conceptualized somehow fails to connect.