

Dragon's Den Sketch

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Three 'DRAGONS' sit on three chairs on stage. They have stacks or bags of money on the table. The 'DRAGONS' will not be named, only referred to as DRAGON A, DRAGON B and DRAGON C for means of the script. To the stage right, a man in a suit (HOPEFORD) sykes himself up before confronting the DRAGONS. The screen shows a picture of the Dragon's Den logo. HOPEFORD turns to greet the DRAGONS.

HOPEFORD

Good evening, Dragons. My name is HOPEFORD HOPEINGTON, and today I am looking for TEN THOUSAND POUNDS for a TWENTY PERCENT SHARE of my carbonated beverage company, 'HOPE'.

HOPE has been running for generations, and has been doing exceptionally well; We have released a range of products which you may have seen advertised.

HOPE MAXX, the drink for the wishful thinker, HOPE NOIR, for the realistic pessimist, and our current best seller, HOPE ZERO, for the complete no hoper.

Our HOPE TECHNICIANS have been working hard on a new product. With your investment, I believe we could truly change the world. We believe that we have finally perfected the recipe for that pure HOPE taste that the public have been searching for.

Today I present to you 'HOPE ORIGINAL'.

Plays the Hope Original advert.

DRAGON C

I like your advert, but it's lacking impact? They should high-five at the end.

DRAGON A

Ooh, yes! That would be great! A nice high-five moment, then freeze-frame!

HOPEFORD

Well... I suppose I could fit that in...?

DRAGON B

Now, I'm just going to be straight with you. You seem like a nice chap, but I think you're deluded.

I am familiar with your products, but this? I just can't get behind it!

I'm more of a HOPE ZERO kind of man, and I think this entire premise is silly.

I don't believe in you, I don't believe in the direction of your company, and I certainly don't believe in your product, and for that reason I am out.

DRAGON C

Sounds like you've been drinking too much of that HOPE ZERO! You should probably give this a try, might make you less of a miserable git!

DRAGON A

This does raise a good question though. You say that HOPE ZERO is your best seller. Why do you think this is?

HOPEFORD

Well, all of our figures suggest a direct correlation between WORLD EVENTS and an increase of our HOPE ZERO sales.

For example, we have been struggling to keep up with demand ever since Trump became President.

DRAGON A

So if sales are doing well, why do you want us to invest in a different product?

HOPEFORD

Unfortunately studies show that regular consumption of HOPE ZERO has increasingly negative effects.

We hadn't got the flavour right for HOPE NOIR - it leaves a bitter taste in the mouth - and the projected popularity for HOPE MAXX proved vastly unrealistic.

HOPE ORIGINAL is the culmination of a lifetime's work.

We believe that we have finally found the perfect recipe to give people genuine hope.

DRAGON B

Genuine hope? Do you have any proof to back this?

DRAGON C

Listen, you're out! You don't get to ask any more questions!

But that is a good point. What proof do you have?

HOPEFORD

Our market research show that after drinking HOPE ORIGINAL, customers feel an overall optimism.

DRAGON A

But how does it work?

HOPEFORD

Well, it gives you a confidence in the future by setting realistic goals and plotting pathways to help you achieve them.

DRAGON C

Hmmm... and how much are you selling this for? What's the price per unit?

HOPEFORD

Ah... well... you see, I believe HOPE ORIGINAL should be made readily available for everyone. I know that this will change the world for the better.
And for that reason I believe it should be free.

DRAGON B

Free!?

DRAGON A

Quiet you!
Free!?!

DRAGON C

Let me get this straight. You are asking us to invest in a product with no possible return?

HOPEFORD

Well, yes, but imagine a world...

DRAGON C

No thank you. I'm out.

DRAGON A

Can I ask. Why are you marketing a product with no financial gain?

HOPEFORD

Just imagine a world where everyone had this kind of hope! It would give people something to live for, something to hold on to!
This isn't some form of crazy dream, this is a reality!

It's a firm foundation on which we can stand when the world is falling apart around us!

Imagine a world with Hope... Original.

DRAGON A

And you want to give this away for free?
You could charge a lot for this, you know?
But because you're not, I'm sorry, it just doesn't make good business sense.
For that reason, I'm out.

Lights go down, a spotlight solos on HOPEFORD HOPEINGTON as he delivers the final lines.

HOPEFORD

I can't believe it. So selfish.
I mean, if I had the ability to give the world a true hope for the future, I'd give all I could for that.
... wouldn't I?
I don't know. Maybe I am deluded. Maybe this is a ridiculous idea.

HOPEFORD, disheartened, looks at the CAN of HOPE ORIGINAL in his hand. With a sigh he opens it and takes a few mouthfuls. He becomes optimistic.

HOPEFORD

NO! This is a great idea! And we can change the world! All I need is the correct investor...
I'm sure the Dragons will come to their senses!
You know what? I'll try again next week!
Ahhh, Hope! Original!