

## Real English Conversations: TV adverts, advertisements and commercials.

### Introduction

Hi, Lori here welcoming you to another episode of Real English Conversations from Better at English . com. In today's episode, Michael and I exchange some opinions about television, particularly with respect to commercials and advertising. In this conversation we discover some differences between British and American English vocabulary, and use some everyday phrasal verbs. As always, you'll find the full transcript and vocabulary list on the website, [www.betteratenglish.com](http://www.betteratenglish.com).

Before listening to the conversation, you might want to pause and think about the following questions:

1. Are you influenced by TV advertising?
2. If so, then how are you influenced?
3. Do TV commercials attempt to appeal to people's logic or to their emotions?
4. Is watching TV is a constructive activity, or is it more a waste of time?

OK, without further ado, here is the conversation.

### Conversation Transcript

Lori: TV is so evil.

Michael: [laughs]

L: I mean, don't...**don't even get me started** on TV – what a time waster and a time sucker it is, and...and all of the horrible...all of the horrible messages that you're bombarded with if you are, you know, just one of these people who comes home in the evening, turns on the TV and just has the TV on kind of in the background until you go to bed at night. Some people even fall asleep in their bedrooms with the TV on.

M: Yeah, well I don't know...I think people would perhaps use this for different reasons. If you just want some background noise, maybe they just regard it the same way they would do putting on a piece of music...

L: Yeah

M: ...in the background, just to have some ambience...

L: Yeah

M: ...as they're **going about** their evening, but I do know what you mean. I think that a lot of programs are a complete waste of time.

L: Well see, that's the thing. I don't think people should be limited to watching things that are educational. I mean, there's nothing wrong with watching something that's just entertaining. [It's just] that there's so much...umm...just really negative stuff out there.

M: Yes. I...But I think that's...that's the commercial side of it, and unless you have something like in England for example – the BBC – they don't have advertisements.

L: [laughs]

M: They... they get their...

L: Ads!

M: ...**revenue** from...

L: Do you really say that, *advertisements*? You don't say...?

M: Yes! That's right, well we would say *advert*s but, or *advertisements*, yeah.

L: Even for the ones that are on the TV? You don't call them *commercials*?

M: No, no! We wouldn't...I mean, I know...we know what commercials are, but no, we would say *the adverts*.

L: Really?

M: "I'm going to make a cup of tea whilst the adverts are on," that's what we would say.

L: Oh that's funny because as...I can't speak for all Americans, but for an American we would definitely call those things you see on TV *commercials*.

M: Right, right that's... that's what I hear Americans calling them but we...

L: Yeah

M: ...we call them *adverts*.

L: OK, interesting

M: But that's, umm, with the BBC they don't get their money from adv-...advertising, they get it from the TV license, which you have to pay just for owning a TV every year, and that's what... you know, they keep it free from adverts.

L: OK

M: So you don't have to **put up with** that, which is really quite nice because all the satellite channels and the independent TV channels in England are umm...full of adverts, all the time, and you really get that impression that people are trying to sell things to you all the time and it's, err...all the things showing you that you have to be young and beautiful and all this kind of...

L: Yeah

M: And "If you buy our products. you will be like these people in these... perfect people..."

L: Yeah, the myth of transformation.

M: Yes, exactly, exactly.

L: Yeah it's like, "let's create things that make you feel bad about yourself and then show you the things you need to buy to..."

M: That's it!

L: "...improve yourself so you will feel better."

M: That's it, and I think that's... that's **mean**, that's... that's not nice.

L: It's horrible!

M: So, but I... that's... that's what I see when I see the adverts, I... I **see through it** so...

L: Yeah

M: But I... I don't watch much TV either, so umm...

L: Uh huh. No, it's horrible – horrible time waster.

## Vocabulary list

### **Don't even get me started**

If someone says, "Don't get me started (on X)" it means that they have strong feelings and a lot to say about the current topic. The idea is that if they start talking about it, you won't be able to get them to stop. You can say it about other people, for example "Don't get him started on butterfly collecting...he'll bore you for hours!"

### **going about**

In this context, to *go about something* means to continue an activity for a period of time. If you are *going about your evening*, you are engaging in your typical evening activities.

**revenue**

Income (money) that a business, organization or government receives regularly. TV licenses generate money for the government.

**to put up with**

*To put up with* (something or somebody) means to tolerate it, even though you don't like it.

**mean** (adj)

*Mean* in this context means unkind (or even cruel). In Br.E, the adjective *mean* can also mean being selfish and ungenerous (particularly about money).

**see through it**

In this context, to *see through something/somebody* means to understand the truth about a person or situation that is intended to deceive or manipulate you.

**Final words**

Thanks for listening, and thanks to those of you who have donated since last time. I can't tell you enough how much Michael and I appreciate your support. Remember, your continued donations make Better at English possible. Bye for now!