

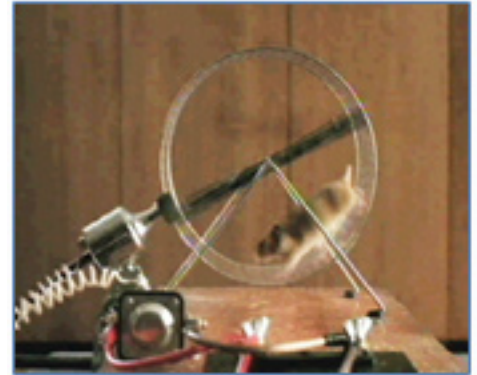
## The Best Work You May Never See: 'Hamlit' Sheds Light On Energy Conservation Via R&R Partners

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June 22, 2007, Robert Goldrich --- What light through yonder treadmill breaks? It's an energy efficient lightbulb in this tongue-in-cheek :30 for Nevada Power directed by Sean Mullens of [Über Content](#), Hollywood, for agency [R&R Partners](#), Las Vegas. And while the breaking yonder light is excerpted from a classic line in *Romeo and Juliet*, this spot carries the offbeat title of "Hamlit," a playful pun on another Shakespearean epic. In this case the title is a combination of "ham" from hamster and "lit" as in the spark from a lightbulb as we see a furry rodent running on a small treadmill, producing enough energy to bring considerable illumination to a room.



"Hamlit"

Competing against the four-legged creature is a strapping man riding an exercise bicycle. He's pumping and straining far harder than the hamster but is barely able to get a flicker out of the bulb connected to his bike. The difference is that the hamster only has to power an energy efficient bulb while the body builder is straining to activate a standard bulb.

The scenario is heightened by a stare down between man and rodent. "It's a perfect example of how a simple idea can work so well," said Daniel Russ, executive creative director of R&R. "In some respects, it's basic advertising—a product demonstration that hopefully inspires people to conserve energy."

Russ credited creative director Ron Lopez for bringing new appeal to the utilities category--akin to what R&R's has done for Las Vegas tourism with renowned "What happens here, stays here" slogan/mantra. Indeed R&R has taken the atypical creative route not only for Nevada Power but also for Southern Nevada Water Authority. R&R turned out the cult favorite "Mrs. Nuttington" last year in which a sweet older woman knocks on the door of a male neighbor whose lawn sprinklers are on incessantly. He answers the door and the woman proceeds to give him a swift kick below the belt, causing him to keel over. The conservation-promoting tagline: "Don't make us ask you again." After "Mrs. Nuttington" (directed by Brian Hughes via the now former [Reginald Pike](#), Toronto) debuted, the Southern Nevada Water Authority reported that consumers in its jurisdiction had stepped up conservation to the tune of millions of gallons being saved on a daily basis.

### Sense of purpose

Russ would like to see "Hamlit" similarly help spark greater use of energy efficient bulbs. "There's a sense of purpose to this advertising and that combined with the creative reputation we've built in this utilities category has helped us attract talented directors from all over who have expressed inter-

est in taking on our work.”

Mullens, noted Russ, brought a lot to the party, including putting the hamster into the scenario, after the original concept pitted Lance Armstrong against an elderly lady on an exercise cycle. Russ added that director Mullens gave a quirky, retro Napoleon Dynamite look and feel to “Hamlit,” helping to further advance the humor. Mullens also exhibited the virtue of patience, waiting to capture the hamster looking intently into the camera for the critical stare down.

R&R Executive Producer Don Turley has proven adept at uncovering the right directors for assignments, continued Russ. “He tracked down and showed us Mullens’ reel and the whacked comedy was terrific and a great fit for what we had in mind.”

### **Budgetary considerations**

Part of the fit also is financial in that public utilities generally have challenged budgets. “You have the dynamic of the public asking, ‘How much did you spend on that spot while my bill is going up?’” related Russ. “But on the other hand, the client lets us do really great creative work. Southern Nevada is one of the few clients you’ll run across that will say, ‘use less of our product’ if it helps the message. And the message is conservation, which along with fun creative helps us get good directors despite tight budgets.”

The R&R creative ensemble included Russ, Lopez, copywriters Jason Luery and Chris Hagan, art directors Diane Vafi and Mark Naperstek, executive producer Turley and producer Kelly Thompson. Preston Lee and Phyllis Koenig executive produced for Über Content, with Sal Tassone serving as producer. The DP was Ross Richardson. Shira Ankori of [Optimus](#), Santa Monica, edited “Hamlit.” Colorist was Steve Rodriguez of [Company 3](#), Santa Monica. Online/visual effects artist was Peter Mayor of [Vendetta Post](#), Santa Monica. Sound designer was Dean Hovey of bicoastal [Elias Arts](#).