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McDonald's Corporation  
2111 McDonald's Drive  
Oak Brook, IL 60523  
ATTN: Sales Department

Dear Mr. McDonald,

I think you may have a very serious problem on your hands, yet I have heard very little in the news about your efforts to solve this problem. Maybe you don't see it as a problem at all, maybe it is a public relations opportunity. But even in that case, I haven't heard anything in the news or in any of the common media/advertising venues.

Of course, I am talking about the matter of McDonald's selling its 100 billionth hamburger. You have so many McDonald's restaurants out there with golden arch signs that say "99 Billion Served" where you've gradually replaced the digits in front of "Billion Served" as you sell more hamburgers -- similar to the way the gasoline stations change the posted price for a gallon of petrol. I, along with many others, am really concerned about what will happen when that 100 billion hump is reached and the signs are unable to turn over to a three digit number. The lack of three digit potential is going to create major chaos, confusion, and casualty.

I know that some McDonald's signs will avoid any issues because they don't have the actual digit numbers, but instead show the generic format "billions and billions served." So maybe those particular restaurants are less concerned with the upcoming 100 billionth burger. Can you tell me approximately when McDonald's expects to sell its 100 billionth burger?

Without going into any solutions to this problem, I wonder if you can settle the debate as to which is the correct catchphrase for this issue. This is like the new DVD wars between HD DVD and blu-ray technology -- or even the old VHS versus BETA videotape debate. I have heard it dubbed the "B 100G problem," but other people have started calling it the "Mac [(M)] issue." So before we get too far down the road, I wondered which term the specialists at the McDonald's Corporate offices are using. Or is there another name altogether?

On the one hand, I like the "B 100G problem," because it is a visual play on the phrase "big problem". I think this is also a take on the Y2K moniker from 6+ years ago. That, of course, stood for Year 2000, using the metric symbol for 1000. From what I understand, "B 100G" is supposed to stand for "Burger 100 billion." In case you weren't aware, 'G' (or Giga) is the metric symbol for billion. I had to go and look that one up myself.

Now I can understand if your public relations department wants to downplay this issue. They will likely steer clear of this name because they don't want to tie any depiction of the phrase "big problem" to your company under any circumstances. That just isn't good business sense.

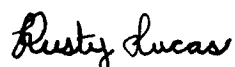
The other current option, "Mac  $\overline{M}$  issue," seems to be used less by the general public right now, but it may take on more widespread support if that is what your corporate officials began calling it in the press. A friend, Paul, told me that the symbol  $\overline{M}$  is actually the Roman numeral signifying 100 billion. I didn't believe him at first. It just made no sense that the number 100 billion could take up less space than the number 23, but when I consulted with the experts, they confirmed that this is in fact correct. I guess the 'M' alone stands for one million and the other three lines are multipliers of some sort that do actually make  $\overline{M}$  come out to 100 billion.

Even though I initially preferred "B 100G problem," "Mac  $\overline{M}$  issue" might sound less troubling to your PR department. Who knows, if this gets enough press and widespread acceptance the  $\overline{M}$  might even supplant the golden arches as your company logo since it looks like the letter M under a big archway. What a great ad campaign! I'd like to see Burger King come up with some way to respond to that! Not even a king playing football can beat that!

The "Mac  $\overline{M}$  issue" also has appeal on another level (to me). I hate the fact that when Y2K occurred, there was so much hullabaloo about how the PC world was in trouble, but that Apple and Macintosh computers were all safe from Y2K. I work in an office that uses old Macintosh computers and **that** is where I felt the Y2K hiccup the most, not on my home PC. So maybe Macintosh needs to feel the heat a little bit. Some people might see "Mac  $\overline{M}$  issue" in a newspaper headline and perceive it as an issue with Apple computers and not a McDonald's matter at all.

It just becomes an issue of putting a positive marketing spin for McDonald's, while leaving a negative "rotten apple" taste in the mouth of Macintosh. I think that we need to start working on the PR schemes and market "B 100G problem" or "Mac  $\overline{M}$  issue" to every possible extent. Then you can make new logo signs with the  $\overline{M}$  symbol to put in place of those existing signs that say "99 Billion Served."

Sincerely,



Rusty Lucas

p.s. Please send me a free McDonald's baseball cap. If possible, send me one with the ultimate 'official' name for the 100 billionth burger problem/issue. But if none of these are yet available, a regular McDonald's cap will do.