

Doomsday Prophet Spends Millions Advertising End of World

Harold Camping's Family Stations Inc. spent more than \$5 million on billboard advertising in 2011—the year Judgment Day was predicted to occur.

Camping said he was “flabbergasted” when the rapture didn't happen on May 21, 2011, but quickly offered his next prophetic utterance: May 21 was Judgment Day, in a spiritual sense, and that judgment would continue right up until Oct. 21 later that year.

The Oakland, organization spent more than \$137,000 and \$732,000 on advertising in 2009 and 2010, respectively, though it is not clear from tax documents whether those amounts include the cost of billboards. The cost of the signs in 2011 was listed separately from the amount spent on advertising, which was nearly \$700,000.

According to , Family Stations used 1,200 billboards nationwide to promote the May 21 prediction. The ministry also promoted the event in 84 languages through its Family Radio network and through the use of caravans. *The Los Angeles Times* reports that Camping's organization was believed to have spent as much as \$100 million on the caravan and billboard campaign.

The signs, which directed people to the website , said things like, “Noah Knew” and “Save the Date! Return of Christ May 21, 2011.”

The 91-year-old Camping, known in some circles as the “prophet of doom,” maintained his prediction even after the world carried on following May 21. In yet another ridiculous end-of-the-world assertion, he said that people who accepted Jesus

Christ as their Savior after May 21 aren't really saved at all. Shortly after the second date, Oct. 21, came and went, Camping repented for his false predictions.

His confession put an end to his controversial end-of-the-world predictions that first made headlines nearly two decades ago when he predicted the end of the world in 1992, insisting the rapture would happen on Sept. 6, 1994.

Family Stations' total revenue in 2011—which mostly came as contributions, grants and gifts—totaled more than \$21.9 million. Its expenses, at \$43.5 million, more than doubled its revenue that year.