

DIGITAL PULLS AD

In response to concerns raised by the Catholic League, Digital Equipment Corporation of Massachusetts has withdrawn an ad that the league found objectionable.

The ad promoted Digital computers, contrasting them with a well-known competitor. What the league found unacceptable was the large graphic that featured the Inquisition: monks were depicted holding crucifixes in the face of tortured soldiers. Moreover, the word "Heresy" was printed across the illustration. The effect of the ad, however unintentional, was to unnecessarily stir prejudice against Catholicism.

In a letter to Digital, we stated that they ought to be able to advertise their product "without resorting to such a crass caricature of Catholic history." We also sent along a recent book review of Henry Kamen's new work, "The Spanish Inquisition." As one reviewer of this book concluded, the "torture-mad Inquisition is largely a 19th century myth." No wonder: Kamen effectively debunks prevailing views on the subject, noting, for instance, the role played by foreign propaganda in the creation of the diabolic image of the Inquisition.

The letter that the Catholic League received said that "It is never the intention of Digital Equipment Corporation to offend any religious, ethnic or racial group in its advertisements. We regret that the reproduction of the famous Diego Rivera mural in one of our advertisements has caused this reaction. We have withdrawn this advertisement from further publication."

The league is delighted with Digital's responsible decision.