

# What Kind of Advertising Is Right For You?

## By Blair Entenmann, President, MarketingHelp!

Every business, regardless of industry or maturity should advertise their products and services. The issues are;

- 1) how much should you spend on advertising given your industry's competitive environment, target audience, and cost structure?, and
- 2) What is the best form of advertising to maximize its efficiency and effectiveness for your specific Business?

The advantages and disadvantages of different types of some common "traditional" media are:

**Television:** TV is exciting! It has high impact because of its sight, sound, and movement. TV advertising can be very expensive, particularly in a large market. The production cost of a quality produced commercial and the airtime can be too expensive for many businesses. But it can be done on a budget with the use of targeted local cable TV cut-ins.

**Radio:** Advertising is a sound only medium that uses a listener's imagination. It's possible to more selectively target your audience based on the stations format and location. Radio provides lots of flexibility for special events and short-term promotions. To use radio your product/service needs to be easily explained verbally.

**Magazines:** Magazines offer even more target audience selectivity. There are many options from consumer to trade publications. Magazines have a long lifespan, and offer high quality color/photo reproduction. However, they are non-intrusive and have a slow reach and frequency "build".

**Newspapers:** Local newspapers offer geographic selectivity. For target audience selectivity you need to run ads in the right section of the paper (sports for men, lifestyle or fashion for women,). Major metro newspapers are declining in circulation and readership with more people getting their news online and don't have time to read the paper everyday. Consider weekly suburban papers as a more affordable and effective advertising vehicle.

**Direct Mail:** Direct mail has the flexibility to target a prospective customer group or a current customer in any geographically defined area. You can include as much information as you need to accomplish your objectives. It can have a high cost per person, but you can have much less waste than mass-market mediums, if it's not perceived as junk mail.

**Signage:** Outdoor signs can be one of the most cost efficient media vehicles available. Outdoor signs can help "capture" traffic going by your business by reminding prospects of your company and its key selling message. If you have delivery or service trucks, the whole vehicle can be used an attractive mobile billboard. However, signage is limited by the length of message you can effectively deliver at a glance.

**Ad Specialties:** Advertising and promotional specialties are great as reminder advertising to get and keep your name and key selling message in front of your prospects. They can be delivered through the mail or in person by your salespeople. Poorly chosen and used, ad specialties can be perceived as "trinkets and trash" that projects a bad image for your company.

It's a good strategy to use more than one media type to maximize your target audience reach and frequency. Advertising can build awareness of your brand, create a more fertile selling environment, and generate more sales for your business. Look for our article on Internet Advertising Secrets for new media advertising alternatives from Banner Ads to Broadcast Email and Podcasts.

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