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MPA logo

A study conducted with Simmons Market research Bureau on brand usage, based on 6,301 surveys, concludes that the more prospects are exposed to advertising, the higher the planned and actual usage of that brand. Prior to a six-month campaign, readers were asked questions about their awareness of the firm. After the campaign, familiarity with the company more than doubled, and purchase intent among subscribers increased by more than 50 percent!

A single ad can keep working for a full year and more. Not only can it continue to generate sales leads, it can also increase sales and profits. In one case study, an advertiser was discouraged with the results after the second ad appeared and was tempted to cancel the schedule but was persuaded not to. After the third ad, the advertiser began to receive high quality inquiries. And subsequent ads generated even more sales leads. Most importantly, the leads generated developed into new sales for the advertiser. Just because you as the advertiser get tired of looking at the same ad, don't conclude that the consumers will. The data shows that ads can be repeated many times to the consumer without losing significant effectiveness.

Concentrating ads. The frequency requirement doesn't necessarily mean that your advertising has to be drawn out over a long period of time. All the data shows that a concentrated ad campaign provides a significantly greater return on investment. Concentration is not only more cost effective, but a high-frequency campaign in one or two publications affords the advertiser stronger relationships and entitles the advertiser to more value-added services from those publications.

Placing more than one ad for a single product in a single issue of a magazine has proven to be effective in expanding the number of interested readers. Multiple insertions serve as reinforcement for the initial ad's sales message. Readex studied an advertiser running three ads for a single product in a single issue of a magazine with the following results: Reader interest of 37 percent for the first ad, 23 percent for the second, and 21 percent for the third. The unduplicated readership was 42 percent. "Remember seeing" scores increase 21 percent when two or more ads are placed by an advertiser within the same issue of a specialized business magazine.

Business marketers should remember that though the temptation may be great to "blow the budget" on one insertion of a multi-page, high-impact ad, nothing is as effective as a high frequency, consistent advertising program concentrated in one or two leading publications in your market.

Advertise all year. Smart business marketers advertise all year long. It keeps their products' benefits top of mind with potential buyers throughout the thousands of buying cycles that occur each year. The difference between the highest and lowest quarter is just 3.6 percent.

Since advertising readership is steady through the year and purchasing decisions can take place any time, it clearly pays to run advertising throughout the year. A consistent advertising program is necessary to maintain product awareness among prospects and customers. And with compressed buying cycles your message needs to be in front of a buyer at the moment the purchase decision is being made.

Your advertising program. Well, there you have it. A brief look at the art and science of advertising. It's an art because of the creative side to producing compelling ads. But there's also considerable science involved, too, in deciding when, where and how to advertise. You'll find it useful to think of advertising more as a process than a product. An on-going advertising program needs to be carefully planned, committed to in the budget and monitored. Contrary to the thinking of some, advertising success can and must be tracked, and professional marketers have developed ways to so.

The professional marketing staff of MPAMedia stands ready to assist you in any aspect of your marketing program, from planning to placement to production.

illustrations are available today, often at a reasonable price. The downside with using them is that other people may pick the same photos you did, and that can undercut the unique value of your message.

As a general rule, photographs or illustrations designed to be taken literally, should have captions beneath or alongside them. David Ogilvy, in *Ogilvy on Advertising*, tells us: "More people read the captions under illustrations that read the body copy, so never use an illustration without putting a caption under it. Your caption should include the brand name and/or promise."

Use of color. To generate reader interest, the first step is to capture reader attention; and the use of four-color is one of the most successful attention-getting techniques. Cahners research reports that four-color ads receive readership scores 38 percent higher than black-and-white ads. An ARF/ABP Study shows that a campaign of color ads increased sales nearly twice as much as similar campaign of black-and-white ads for the same product. When a four-color insert appeared in the middle of a black-and-white campaign, product sales climbed dramatically. Conversely, when a single black-and-white ad ran within a color schedule, sales dropped.

Layout and size. Next to color, size affects readership more significantly than any other variable. When you run a spread ad (sometimes called a double truck), nothing competes for the reader's attention—no editorials, no art, no other ads. Increased ad size contributes to an ad's visibility, thus making it easier for the ad to be seen as the reader pages through the publication. Two-page spread ads receive 37 percent more readership than one-page ads and 133 percent higher readership scores than fractional ads. Based on the responses from 4,723 surveys, we know that size, color and frequency definitely make an impression! As an ad size increases, so does the readership score. Insert advertising increased "recall seeing" scores 44 percent and "recall reading" scores 56 percent, according to Harvey Research. Today advertisers are experimenting with any number of multi-page formats. One of the primary reasons advertisers turn to this approach is to get a "shotgun" effect. That is, by placing several ads on alternate pages, you increase the chances of being seen and read.

Where and How to Run Your Ads

Reach. If nobody gets the publication your advertising in, obviously they won't see your ad. So your first two questions in talking to a print media representative are: (1) What is your circulation? and (2) How high is the level of readership? Publications may be sent free to a huge mailing list, but, if nobody reads them, nobody buys your product. Specialized business publications like those published by MPAMedia (versus general business magazines) reach an overwhelming majority of business decision makers, and often have extremely high readership. Specialized business publications are targeted directly to a specific market. No waste and no uninterested readers. One or two leading publications will, on an average, reach the great majority of readers reached by five magazines—at a fraction of the cost of all five.

Frequency. Effective advertising almost always requires repetition of your message. The Ebbinghouse Curve of Forgetting, first developed in 1985, shows that two-thirds of us forget specific messages one day after exposure. Since it's estimated that a magazine reader spends an average of just seven to 10 seconds with each ad, you can see why it makes sense to repeat an ad over and over. Another reason for repetition is readership turnover. Research tells us that more than 20 percent of a magazine's readership changes annually due to decision makers being promoted, transferred or leaving the company.

Another reason for advertising frequently is that we cannot predict when a buyer will enter or leave the purchasing cycle or know how long each company's purchasing cycle is. Repeating significantly increases advertiser recognition. Readex Inc.'s database of advertising readership supports increased frequency, noting that ads can be repeated many times without losing significant effectiveness, and, in some cases, they actually gain effectiveness.

Headlines. Ad headlines that work usually have these characteristics: (1) They grab attention, thus cutting through the clutter. (2) They convey news rather than belaboring the predictable. (3) They highlight the benefits to the reader of buying the product. Most good headlines stimulate curiosity, making the reader want to read further. Many good ads also imply that acting on them is easy. Here are some examples of successful headlines, courtesy of advertising guru John Caples:

- *How a Fool Stunt Made Me a Star Salesman*

By combining two features, curiosity and self-interest, into a single headline the copywriter produced one of the most successful mail-order advertisements of its day.

- *What's Wrong In This Picture?*

Readers suspect they know what's wrong in the picture, but they have to read the copy to make sure. Thus the headline accomplishes its main purpose, getting the reader into the copy.

- *How I Improved My Memory in One Evening*

This headline suggests that the method is quick and easy.

Body copy. While many believe ad copy should be brief, some of the most successful ads have had an abundance of words. So the issue is not length *per se* but what you say. Whatever the length, ad copy must be persuasive. It must support the premise expressed in the headline with solid reasoning and a positive, enthusiastic tone. Argumentation is key, which means that every sentence should logically follow the one before. Expect people to read your copy with a critical eye, and don't leave any questions unanswered if you can help it.

Remember that specifics sell harder than generalities. For example, the statement that "As of today, 97,482 people have bought one of these appliances" is stronger than "Nearly 100,000 of these appliances have been sold." The reason there are so many general claims used in advertising copy is that collecting specific data requires time and trouble.

Having said that, we should also acknowledge that good copy writing involves motivating, touching the heart, not just appealing to the mind. You can overload copy with facts. Remember that people often buy for emotional reasons rather than factual ones. And, again, always emphasize the benefits to the customer. If you're short on space, it's better to assert the benefits than it is to take the same space for extra commentary on features.

Writing tips. Here are three tips about the writing process. First, write it through vigorously the first time, and don't worry about spelling, grammar or anything else. Just write from the heart. You'll clean up the copy and refine it in the rewriting stage. Second, write as though you had something important to say to a friend. Tell yourself, "I've just bought this Widget and it's great. I think Kim and Betty would like to know about it. I'm going to write and tell them and lay out the details." Third, use simple, direct language, and avoid trying to impress with the language itself.

Call to action. As the words suggest, a call to action asks people to make a decision about your product. It says, at least, call for more information. But a better way is to offer some benefit for their acting promptly, e.g., "Sign up today and get a free toaster." More than one call to action can be used, but never produce an ad without asking the reader to do something. As noted earlier, in today's world it may not be practical to expect that they will go directly to the buying stage. You may need an interim step, so the call to action takes them to that next step, e.g., "Get a free estimate."

Photography/illustrations. We live in a visual age, and illustrations or *good quality* photos can help describe your product and its benefits. The best photos or illustrations support the headline rather than take the reader off on a different track. Usually strong images with a central focal point work best. Photos that are too complex distract from the message. Stock photography and

controlled message to a particular name and mailing address, but it may prove costly. Advertising lets you not only control your message but broadcast it, and, if done wisely, advertising can be extremely cost-effective.

Advertising often is the easiest way to get your message out to the most people during a given period of time. Advertising establishes contact, creates awareness, builds brand and product preference, and even keeps customers sold. Advertising changes opinions and attitudes. According to some studies, the total cost of selling to groups exposed to advertising often drops 10 to 30 percent. Non-advertisers are at a disadvantage; their total cost of selling actually increases 20 to 40 percent.

Direct response. In today's world with so many advertising messages it's often too much to expect advertising to drive customers all the way to the sale, especially where big-ticket items are involved. Instead, the effectiveness of today's advertising is best measured in its ability to generate leads, which, in turn, are followed up by a sales person or more specific marketing materials. Such direct response advertising opens the door, though its success is predicated on the ability to measure the response. Use of free offers or other invitations in conjunction with the ad lets you track who is interested in being sold. An advertising program with a built-in response mechanism is a valuable tool in reaching key buyers.

Advertising vehicles. Of course, there are lots of ways to advertise, and in many instances, as Marshall McLuhan reminded us, the medium *is* the message. At one level that simply means that television is a visual medium whereas radio is not. Print has great pulling power because it incorporates both words and pictures, but obviously they aren't moving as they would on television. On the other hand, it usually costs more to advertise on television than it does to advertise in print. Thus another important lesson in advertising is to be wise in choosing the medium.

For example, if you wanted to market hip huggers to teeny boppers in suburban San Francisco, you probably wouldn't run a national television campaign. It's a shotgun when you need a rifle. Where is your target market, what do they see and what circumstances will drive them to act? The art and science of *niche marketing* has gained sophistication in recent years as sellers determine how to reach those who are ready to buy and thus avoid spending money sending out messages to those who aren't.

The value of print. In many ways, the most tried and true of all advertising methods is still print advertising. Print is especially effective when you need to convey more information than can be contained in a 15-second television or radio sound bite. Since most of the advertisers to the chiropractic profession have that need, we'll concentrate here on how to use print to advertise effectively. We at MPAMedia also offer a variety of supplementary electronic advertising opportunities, but our primary vehicles are print publications. Readers like the sense of security they get with print materials they can hold in their hands and digest at their own pace. Print has shelf life, and it can sell long after it was first obtained.

Producing Ads That Connect With Customers

Composing ads. Like other aspects of business, writing great ads takes talent and skill. If it's at all within your budget, MPAMedia strongly urges you to consult an advertising professional, either those on our staff or someone with ad agency experience. What we'll talk about here will give you a better sense of how ad agencies think when producing your ads and a little guidance if you have to produce the ads yourself. Ads follow a variety of formats, but the one we'll concentrate on here is the classic three-part ad typical of magazines and newspapers. The three parts are the headline, the body copy and the call to action. We'll also talk about how photos or illustrations can add power to the sales message.

MPAmedia Guide to Successful Advertising

Use these keys and your ads will unlock bigger profits

This booklet is designed to help *MPAmedia* advertisers get the maximum return on their advertising dollars. Actually, what's contained here will assist you as an advertiser no matter where you place your ads. We'll touch on everything from how to write an ad to where to run it, and you'll get a good handle on what it takes for advertising success.

Perhaps you're wondering why we would give away our expertise in marketing and advertising. It's simply because we view our interaction with you as a partnership. We're committed to elevating the chiropractic profession, including vendors supplying valuable products and services. A rising tide lifts all boats. So let's talk about the keys to successful advertising

What You Need to Know About Advertising

Marketing vs. advertising. In the pages that follow we'll walk you through some fundamental aspects of marketing, with a special focus on advertising. Right there is the first valuable lesson. Marketing and advertising, precisely defined, aren't the same thing. Classic marketing theory discusses four aspects—"the four p's" — *product, place, price* and *promotion*. Advertising is promotion and only one sort of promotional activity at that. Public relations, open houses and direct mail are other commonly used promotional tactics.

Differentiation. Advertising or other promotional tactics rightly follows concentration on the three more strategic aspects of marketing. In thinking about (1) the nature and quality of your product or service, (2) the place people can find it or way it's delivered, and (3) its price or value per dollar, the overriding issue is how you *differentiate* yourself from the competition. Chances are that the more successful you become the more imitators you have. Staying ahead of them will be determined by your ability to demonstrate that your product or service offers unique benefits, that it is delivered more conveniently and that it represents the greatest possible value.

Benefits vs. features. At the core of successful marketing differentiation is connecting to the *individual* customer. Does your superior quality or other differentiating aspect truly meet his or her special needs? Much of advertising fails (as do many sales efforts in general) because it concentrates on the *features* of the product or service—which the seller is personally invested in—rather than on translating those features into *benefits* to the consumer. The consumer doesn't care about the high-tech features on the garden tractor if he's looking to buy a sports car. And if he has his heart set on red, the fact that you have a great blue model on the lot may not cut it. Tell him you'll find exactly what he wants in red. Never assume that potential buyers implicitly understand what your product's features mean to them. Spell it out.

Market surveys. Gathering data about what people want and then following up with satisfaction surveys can be more instructive over the long term than relying on the bottom line short term. How did the customers hear about your products, what motivated them to pursue their interest, what are their expectations with regard not only to the product but also to service after the sale. Remember that consistent sales are about establishing relationships, and the more information you have to monitor the development of those relationships the better. Market surveys can give you a clear picture of your target market and what it will take to reach it.

Why advertise? After you have figured out what product or service you ought to sell and to whom it will provide valuable benefits exceeding those offered by the competition, then it's time to consider advertising. Advertising is defined as the use of purchased space or air time to convey a message about a product or service. It's useful to distinguish advertising from tactics like public relations and direct mail. The advantage of public relations is that it's free; the disadvantage is that you're at the mercy of the people telling your story. Direct mail enables you to target your