

mei-ster:
Suffix denoting
a professional
practitioner

ProfitMeister

M A X I M I Z I N G Y O U R M A R K E T I N G M O N E Y

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Increase Advertising ROI!

Ask your media sales rep to discuss recommendations and results; gain insight with these 21 questions

“Advertising is as American as baseball, hot dogs, apple pie and Chevrolet.”

“The Fall of Advertising & The Rise of PR”
Al & Laura Ries

“I always thought you would go into something that required more thought than advertising,” Mom commented to me shortly after I’d accepted a position in advertising sales for WMKC Radio in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. In small towns like ours, advertising salespeople ranked with attorneys and used car salesmen.

What I now know: creating awareness, traffic, recognition and sales requires concentrated effort, dollars and thought. No magic formula for instant results exists.

Truth: no easy answer

Most of us recognize three traditional forms of mass advertising: radio, television and newspaper. Within each medium are hundreds of options, each with advantages and disadvantages, making the choices seem overwhelming and the probability of success slim.

Roy H. Williams, author of “The Wizard of Ads” and other books on advertising, says, “The truth is made of specifics and substantiation; it’s solid.”

To get to truth in advertising, there are three things to do:

1. Focus on your message, your unique selling proposition. Find something that you do differently from anyone else and describe it succinctly in ten words or less.

2. Take the time to think through your plan. Ask, “Where can I effectively tell my story to the most people at the best price?”
3. Consistently and persistently tell that story with passion and enthusiasm.

Finding answers

Advertising lets businesses tell a story to many people at the same time. I’ve found that the number of experts on the subject of advertising grows in direct proportion to an owner/operator’s lack of marketing knowledge.

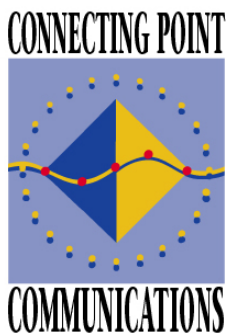
Media salespeople, for example, have a built-in bias when making recommendations, seldom ruling themselves out of a sale. Friends and family may not be well-informed as media resources either, although most will have an opinion. While fellow business owners can offer advice, most do not have your customer or business goals in mind.

After talking with several entrepreneurs, I developed a list of questions for use with media representatives. I encourage you to strengthen your advertising ROI by researching your choices.

Question the medium

Consider the medium in which you might advertise. Ask media representatives:

1. Who is your competition?



P.O. Box 3523
Albuquerque, NM
87190
505-280-9772

“The man who stops advertising to save money is like the man who stops the clock to save time.”

Unknown

2. How does your newspaper, radio station, TV station, magazine (insert the product here) compare with others in its field?
3. Why should I advertise with you rather than with your competition?
4. Describe your audience for me.
5. What other businesses advertise with you?

Question the company

Another strategy involves asking the media salesperson about their company with open-ended questions. The answers given allow you to judge competency and authenticity for yourself.

6. Talk with me about the kind of growth your company has experienced in the past year. If you hear unsubstantiated braggadocio beware.
7. Where do you get your leads?
8. Who is your average customer? (What type of business do they operate?)
9. What do you recommend for us to get the best results?

Question ad tactics

The media representative who has answered these questions is likely knowledgeable. Talk with him/her about the strategy and tactics he/she recommends with these kind of questions:

10. What is the best section/program/time in which to advertise? For electronic media, when is the best time or the best day to use your medium?
11. Do you have deadlines? Who will do the design for me? (Or, who will produce my advertisement, who will write the copy for my ad?)
12. Why do you recommend this particular plan?

13. Where else do you recommend that I advertise?
14. How do you help ensure that I get results?
15. How can I judge the success or failure of my advertising?
16. How can I increase my business through advertising with you?
17. What kind of return can I expect on the dollars I invest in your medium?
18. When and why do you recommend increasing the size of my advertisement?
19. How do you judge success?
20. Do you offer volume or frequency discounts?
21. Is this negotiable?

Define Your ad plan

Once you've determined where you will advertise, set budgets and timelines and begin. Know that you will build sales over time, but plan for results from the start. Lay a solid foundation by thinking through your campaign. Contrary to popular belief (and my mother) good advertising requires considerable thought.

Keep in mind that well-researched, targeted advertising works in conjunction with every other marketing tactic you use. To get the best bang for your buck, use a consistent message, add a hook or a reason for action and monitor results.

To learn more

When you're ready to advertise, get advice from someone who's been there, someone who can talk knowledgeably about the world of advertising. To contact me, email:

MaryEllen@ProfitMeister.com.



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Connecting Point
Communications
P.O. Box 3523
Albuquerque, NM
87190-3523
505-280-9772

www.ProfitMeister.com