

The Correct Plan

Implementing an Effective Advertising Campaign

With any business, when you start advertising, you need to have a clear plan with thought-out objectives. Whether you design your campaign to communicate product and service benefits or support an event, you must identify what the specific task is.



This could be:

- **Raising awareness of your business within a clearly-identified target market;**
- **Communicating the benefits of your products or services;**
- **Generating leads for your sales force or network.**

An effective advertising campaign will deliver the results that you desire.

THE SEVEN STEPS OF AN EFFECTIVE ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN

Any advertising campaign must have precise and measurable steps in order to be successful from defining the target market to establishing a budget.

Defining the Target Market

As a business owner, you have to determine who your advertising campaign will be aimed toward.

First, you have to understand first who your audience is, which will allow you to decide the type of media to use (print, TV, radio, Internet, etc.) and the creative treatment of the advertisement.

Ask yourself questions such as:

- **Who uses or buys my products and services?**
- **Who's the decision maker? Do I need to communicate with that person?**
- **How many potential users and buyers are there in the market?**
- **How many users are currently buying my products and services? What's my market share?**
- **Where the prospects are located that I want to reach?**
- **What are the characteristics of my prospects – i.e. age, sex, income and their most important considerations for choosing a brand or a supplier?**
- **What is the market's attitude toward my business and products?**
- **What is the role of advertising in reaching my target market?**

Selecting the Right Advertising Media

There are four factors to consider when selecting media for your advertising campaign.

- **How close your target market matches the audience profile of the advertising medium;**
- **The comparative costs of reaching your target market through different media;**
- **Whether the timing of your campaign matches the advertising medium frequency;**
- **Creative opportunities of the medium for the communication of your message.**

Planning When to Run Your Advertising Campaign

First, you will have to consider a number of factors first in relation to the purchasing pattern of your products and services, so that you can time your advertising campaign perfectly.

This includes:

- **When are your prospects and customers making their buying decisions?**
- **If you are launching a new product, when will it be available?**
- **Does the advertising campaign have to tie-in with the timing of any other marketing activity – i.e. an exhibition, direct marketing plan or sales force call?**
- **How fast will you follow up on the advertising campaign?**

There is also production and media lead times that you will have to take under consideration when you are planning your advertising campaign, so remember to take into account when the publication/broadcasting dates are for the mediums in question, as well as what is required to run your advertisements and how long will it take to produce.

Frequency of Your Advertising Campaign

The more campaigns that you do, your business products and services will generate more awareness. In turn, this will run the number of new opportunities for your business to take advantage of with customers that have interest. Many prospects and customers will make contact based on the continual reinforcement of the message. The success of your advertising depends on its frequency.

A few elements affect the frequency of an advertising campaign:

- **How often the publication/broadcast appears;**
- **The size of your budget will determine the number of advertising appearances and length.**

Generating a Call-to-Action

This is a crucial element of any advertising campaign that will ultimately determine how successful it will become. You must make it easy for your prospects and customers to respond – i.e. placing an order, arranging a sales meeting, requesting more information, visiting your business, sampling the product or service.

The response options can include:

- **E-Mail;**
- **Contact on the web site;**
- **Telephone;**
- **Fax;**
- **Mail.**

You should always review the cost, convenience and practicality of these options as this will help you decide where your call to action needs to be focused.

Establishing Your Campaign Budget

There is a plethora of costs that you will consider with your advertising budget.

Direct Costs

- Production costs – i.e. design, writing and production.

- Media costs – i.e. Internet, TV, radio, print, direct mail.

Indirect Costs

- Response handling – i.e. Internal or outsourced.
- Management costs of planning and controlling the campaign.

Setting Up Your Advertising Schedule

You will have to determine how long each individual activity will take in your advertising campaign. You have to integrate your plans with other marketing activities that your business has. For example, with any advertising performance, your sales team has to capitalize immediately on the incoming leads, which in turn can turn into successful transactions.

Also remember, you have to have the resources in place to achieve your target goals so that your advertising campaign has the impact intended.