

SCIENTIFIC ADVERTISING

How To Develop a Superior Advertising Program

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MAIN IDEA

From a few thousand consumers, you can accurately predict what millions will do.

The scientific approach to advertising success is to continually test and compare advertising concepts with keyed response devices (like coupons) so the effectiveness of each advertisement can be compared. Several different approaches should be tried, and the results compared.

In this way, the optimum advertising approach can be developed on a small, test scale. The advertising can then be applied to the wider, general market with confidence.

1. Advertising Laws

Advertising has moved from an art form to a science based on well proven principles, facts and established procedures.

2. Just Salesmanship

In its purest form, advertising is a form of salesmanship. It does not exist independently. That is, the only criteria by which to judge an advertisement is the same criteria by which to judge any salesman - does it produce the results?

3. Offer Service

Effective advertising is based on the reality that people do things for their own reasons. The display of a business name is far less significant to a prospective customer than a statement of the benefits they can personally obtain from a product.

4. What Mail-Order Advertising Teaches

The severest test of any advertising is in mail order sales. Here results are immediately calculated and analyzed. Mail order advertising is either profitable or it is not. The principles of success in mail order can be applied to all advertising.

5. Headlines

The sole purpose of a headline in an advertisement is to attract the attention of people who will buy your product or service.

6. Psychology

Human nature is perpetual. The underlying principles are fixed, enduring, and unchanged down through the ages.

7. Being Specific

Platitudes and generalities leave no impression whatsoever. In fact, they can even damage the credibility of any product or service. It is far more effective to make a specific claim.

8. Tell Your Full Story

Assume that you will only ever manage to catch a person's attention once. Therefore, every ad must be self contained. Serial ads building on the previous ads never, ever work.

9. Art in Advertising

Pictures in advertising are extremely expensive. They should never be used to attract attention or because they're interesting.

Use them only when they form a better argument for your product than the same amount of space in type.

10. Things Too Costly

There are many things which can be achieved by advertising which are too expensive to attempt. All advertising projects must be determined by a known scale of cost and benefit.

11. Information

Genius is commonly described as the art of taking pains. To develop successful advertising for any product, study it from every conceivable angle looking for the keynote of success.

12. Strategy

Advertising often looks very simple. This leads many business managers to conclude they can do it themselves. In reality, advertising is very strategic and requires a vast background.

13. Use of Samples

Any good product will be its own best salesperson. Therefore, samples are of prime importance. However expensive, they usually form the cheapest method of sales in the long run.

14. Getting Distribution

Never start advertising without having in place a distribution network to fill the anticipated demand. Otherwise, the effectiveness of advertising can be unintentionally diminished.

15. Test Campaigns

The court of last resort for any advertising are the buyers of your product or service. No amount of conjecture outweighs experience in the marketplace.

16. Leaning on Dealers

The object of any advertising is to buy new customers at whatever price will pay a profit. Your business will never be built by relying on dealers to do your selling for you. Be content if dealers fill the orders that you generate.

17. Individuality

A person who desires to make an impression must stand out from the crowd in some way or another. However, this must be done in a pleasing rather than an eccentric or abnormal way.

18. Negative Advertising

Attacking a rival is never good advertising. It looks unfair.

19. Letter Writing

Letter writing is also a scientific advertising exercise.

20. A Name That Helps

The ideal business name tells a story and justifies the space it occupies by aiding the sales effort.

21. Good Business

An effective business manager doesn't take unnecessary risks. The scientific test-based approach to advertising is ultimately the safest way of all to build and sustain a business over the longer term. Nothing else even comes close.

1. ADVERTISING LAWS

Main Idea

Advertising has moved from an art form to a science based on well proven principles, facts and established procedures.

Supporting Ideas

The accurate tracing of the results of historical advertising programs provides an accurate statistical base from which effective advertising can be developed.

The largest single factor in developing this amount of statistical information has been keyed advertising - coupons which identify which advertisement drew the customer's response. An accurate measurement of results allows individual elements of an advertisement to be varied (such as headlines, settings, use of pictures, etc.) and the results of these variations to become immediately apparent.

Advertising is an exact science which does not need to be conducted on a "stab-in-the-dark" basis. Rather, advertising is a safe and sure undertaking which can lead to enormous leverage and success.

2. JUST SALESMANSHIP

Main Idea

In its purest form, advertising is a form of salesmanship. It does not exist independently. That is, the only criteria by which to judge an advertisement is the same criteria by which to judge any salesman - does it produce the results?

Supporting Ideas

An advertisement is either profitable or unprofitable, based on actual sales achieved. Therefore, advertising should be evaluated by the same standards as would be used for evaluating a salesman.

Advertising is multiplied salesmanship. Whereas a good salesman can speak to one person at a time, an advertisement can be appealing simultaneously to thousands of prospective customers. This means advertising can have a huge impact on a business's profitability.

In considering advertising as salesmanship, a business manager should not accept any excuse for the ineffectiveness of an ad that would not be accepted if made by a salesman. A mediocre salesman may affect part of a business enterprise, but mediocre advertising can impact on every part of the operation.

Salesmanship rather than penmanship should be the guiding principle of any ad. The facts must be stated concisely, clearly and convincingly. People who are concentrating more on the fine style used or any other aspect have been distracted from the whole purpose of the ad - to generate business and create customers.

Think of advertising as salesmanship-in-print. That is, a good ad should say exactly what your best salesmanship would say in that same situation. The very best salesman are generally plain and sincere professionals who know their product and their buyer's needs. Any attempt to use theatrical flourishes in person tends to create suspicion on the part of the buyer. Advertising should avoid the same mistake.

Whenever considering any advertising question, ask yourself:

1. "Would this help a salesman sell the goods in person?"
2. "Would this help me sell if I met the buyer face to face?"

There are several common misconceptions on the subject of advertising including:

1. Ads should be very brief as people read little.
Does any business manager tell their salesman to stand in front of a customer in person and stop speaking after 100 words? Why handicap a salesman that way? An ad needs to give whatever information is required to make a prospect take action - no more or less.
2. Ads must use slogans or clever conceits.
Would you feel comfortable using those slogans in person if you were face-to-face with a client? If so, go ahead. Otherwise, avoid like the plague.
3. Large type and huge headlines are necessary to stand out from the crowd.
Do you admire a salesman who speaks in a loud voice? Magazines and newspapers are printed in 8-point type which people will read for hours on end if they are interested in the subject under discussion. Anything bigger is like loud conversation.
4. Ads must have something strange and unusual in them.
Do you hire salesmen who dress differently to their prospects? For example, would you send a skinhead punk rocker to make an important presentation to conservative businessmen?
5. Effective ads are very dressy and stylish.
While there is some merit in seeking for excellence, it is an unimportant issue in terms of the effectiveness or otherwise of an ad.
6. Ads must be humorous to be effective.
Spending money is generally speaking a very serious matter for most people. Would you expect a salesman to go out and have a cavalier attitude toward spending the money of the person he is meeting with.

The key issue is that an advertisement is not written to entertain but to sell. Judge an advertisement by a salesman's standards rather than a performers standards.

It may be useful when writing ads to keep in mind a typical buyer of your product or service. Tailor everything you say or do to that buyer, and what you would do if you were face-to-face with that buyer. Don't think of people as a huge mass. Picture yourself speaking with a half-sold prospect and say in the ad what you would say to them in person.

Some people actually do face-to-face selling before they plan or write an ad. Others send out questionnaires to learn the present attitudes of their buyers. Either approach is quite valid and can lead to some good ads. These initiatives should help eliminate guesswork which can be a major impediment to advertising effectiveness.

The most effective advertising people have empathy - they place themselves in the position of their clients or customers. They also study the consumer meticulously to the exclusion of all other factors.

Ads should never be planned or written to please the seller. They should only be written from the perspective of the interests of the buyer.

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