

Advertising to Fulfill the Marketing Plan

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PART II

PART I of this article covered the elements of communication, how to develop an advertising program, setting an advertising budget, and selecting a message. This concluding installment includes a discussion of the various types of media, how to evaluate an advertising program, legal considerations, and a summary of how advertising can fulfill your marketing plan.

Where to Say It

The Media

The most popular form of advertising by hearing instrument specialists is the Yellow Pages. The 1990 *Hearing Instruments* Survey found the next most utilized media were newspapers, direct mail, newsletters and radio/TV advertising in that order, from most to least used.

Once more the choice of media is dependent on what you want to say, whom you want to reach and how much you can spend to deliver the message. It is essential to look at the business, review the marketing objectives and study the target population. A thorough demographic analysis of the prospective clients by age, sex, income, education, occupation, type of residence and buying habits can then be related to each of the major advertising media.

Yellow Pages telephone directory listings are such a common venue of "consumer search" that many businesses think of this format as a utility and consider it part of the regular telephone expense operating budget of the business. It does not represent a flexible advertising expense but a necessary part of being in business.

The telephone directory is a unique medium because by the time the prospect is using it, a decision to buy has already been made. It is an opportunity to reach your prospects at the precise moment they are in need of your service. If you answer the five basic questions who, what, where, when and why with an impact, the directory can produce new business for you. It is also positioning you directly with your competition and therefore your message has to give the prospect a reason for choosing you. Once more, a simple design is most effective: the components of a good ad include the specialty, name and telephone number, location and hours, and the benefits you offer to take care of their special needs. Some sample headlines that make you unique:

- Why not hear better? You can!
- Senior Care Specialist
- House calls available

Additional approaches for yellow page listings are: the use of multiple listings — this is an opportunity to use the manufacturer's co-op offer and be listed under a brand name as well as your own name; make your listing prominent by use of reverse print, color, referral in the column listing to a display ad; make your ad one size larger than the largest size of your direct competitor, unless there are a large number of display ads. If there are many display ads, drop back to your in-column alphabetical listing and increase the size of that. Study the current directory before making your decisions. Remember when "the fingers do the walking" they start at the front and top and work down and backward.

The selection of the medium of newspapers, direct mail, radio/TV and outdoor advertising is based in finding the most cost-efficient way to deliver the desired number of exposures to the target audience, i.e., how many times does the advertisement have to be seen or heard to create a level of audience awareness. Each of these media has advantages and disadvantages which must be weighed against your objectives and budget.

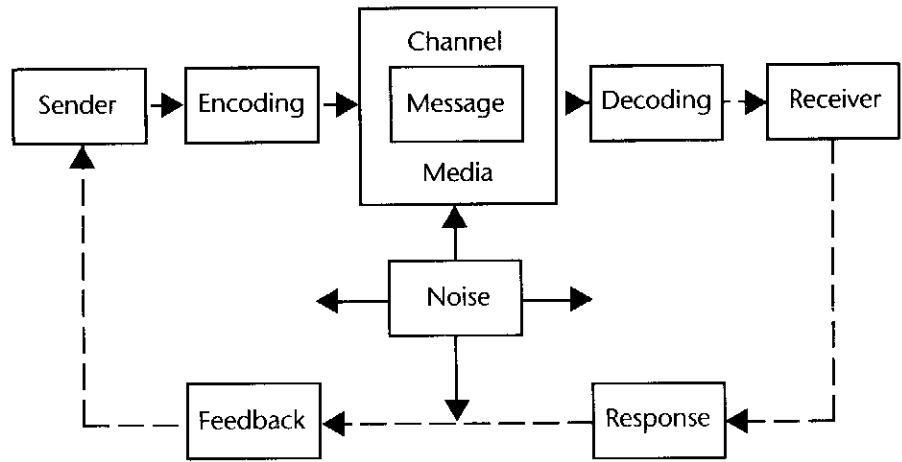
Newspapers provide good local coverage and depth penetration. They have a wide range of appeal and broad acceptance. Although newspaper readership is declining, a higher percentage of readers are in the 45-64 age group. Newspapers also offer timing and space flexibility and are an ideal medium for ads with clipout inquiry forms.

The limitations of newspaper ads are in the relatively short life (generally in and out of the home in one day); strong competition — in a newspaper with 200 ads or more the small ad will get lost in the "noise", and will also get poor placement on the page. Braun (1981) reports that the newspaper reader spends, on average, 34 minutes reading the paper with only 18% of this (6 minutes) used to read ads.

These factors indicate the importance of using the media kits, which are generally available from all media, to determine which papers will reach the maximum number of your target audience. Daily circulation figures will determine which days have the highest readership. This data is useful in setting up your advertising schedule.

Next, select the section in which to

The Communication Process Model



(Reprinted with permission from Kotler, P., *Marketing Management* Prentice Hall, 1984, p. 605)

place your ad, i.e., if the campaign is focused on the benefits of improved hearing for business people, then the financial section would be appropriate. The size of the ad as well as the frequency of exposure will influence reader response.

Other types of newspaper exposure are **weekly papers** and **shopping papers**. These are sometimes ways to reach a localized circulation at very low cost. A regular advertising approach as opposed to the gun shot style has generally been more successful, i.e., 13 exposures during a 52 week period at intervals of one every four weeks versus 13 exposures in 13 weeks. This is consistent with learning theory regarding a regular schedule of reinforcement. It should also be noted that the first three to four exposures tend to get lost in the masking of all the other messages; and the fifth and sixth exposures are the ones that register with the individual. Gensch (1970) further observes that the seventh through tenth exposures are important for their repetition and reminder value.

The relationship of size to readership indicates that increased size does not guarantee increased readership. Creativity and boldness are very strong factors in attracting readership.

Media rates are usually determined by the size of the audience each medium delivers. Cost per thousand is the cost of reaching 1000 readers, viewers, households, etc. It is computed as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Advertising Cost}}{\text{Number of Households}} \times 1000 = \text{Cost/Thousand}$$

$$\text{Example: } \frac{\$600}{12,000} \times 100 = \$50/\text{Thousand (Cost)}$$

Radio, like newspapers, is a timely medium. However, it is highly selective and fragmented as it reaches different kinds of people with different kinds of programs. Essentially the options are all news, talk shows, music and ethnic programs.

There are also different time units: 60, 30 and 10 second commercials; and time grids; morning and evening driving times, 5:00 to 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 to 7:00 p.m., daytime, evening, overnight, and weekend. Stations may also offer a variety of package plans for different budgets. Some will include a combination of day and evening spots, others will offer a total audience plan that will reach all of the listeners in a specified time period.

The benefits radio offers are mass use, high geographic and demographic selectivity and low cost. The average listener

tunes in to stations, not programs, as compared to TV viewers who watch programs, not channels. Since the message is presented by audio only, in order for it to be retained in the listener's mind, it requires many repetitions. A further limitation is that it is ancillary to other activities in which the listener is involved and therefore attracts a lower attention level. Rate structures are also not standardized.

The first thing a radio commercial has to do is get people to *listen*. Surprise them, arouse curiosity, then mention your business name early in the commercial, promise the listener a benefit, repeat the identity and the benefit often, and get the listener involved.

Television, until recently, has been beyond the reach economically of small businesses. However, the advent of cable TV, public access channels and paid programming, have made this medium more accessible and affordable, especially in small market areas. The combinations of sight, sound, color, motion, and drama have made television a formidable force. It commands high attention and high reach. It provides the opportunity to project an image and deliver a message to people in their own homes with significant power and persuasiveness.

The weaknesses include the high absolute cost, the amount of clutter as advertisers fight for the viewer's attention, brief exposure (generally 30 second commercials) and less audience selectivity. As with radio it takes several exposures before a reaction is obtained, but the cost factor is much higher.

Like other advertising costs, TV commercial costs are determined by the size

of the audience, the time of day and the length of the commercial. Station representatives are an important source of information. Once you have indicated your needs and goals they will recommend a package plan of announcements for a specific time period. In addition, information will be provided re: number of homes reached, number of people in the target audience, frequency, rating points, cost per rating point, and cost per thousand viewers.

Areas of consideration in the creation of a commercial are humor, slice of life, testimonials, demonstrations, and problem/solution. Name identification and repetition, as in radio commercials, is very important for recall. The script should have a clear beginning and end to differentiate it from the program. Other tips include the use of an attention grabber in the first frame for visual surprise (before the remote control button is pushed), close ups, sound effects, reinforcement of the promise by having it appear in print, and showing the product in use.

The use of video tape versus film has reduced the cost of commercials and speeded up the production process. Television commercials can be used more repetitively than radio commercials as the combination of visual and auditory stimuli does not have the same fatigue factor.

Outdoor advertising has a more limited scope than the other media discussed. This includes billboards, bench, bus, subway and taxi advertising. It is highly standardized, regulated and disciplined and has generally been consid-

ered a supplementary medium used to support the major media. Since the information is essentially presented to a passing consumer the message has to be consolidated to achieve its impact in a two to three second time period.

Some businesses have had success marketing to the elderly through transit advertising. They position the ads right next to the seats allocated for the senior citizens and at bus stops near their offices. The costs are low and it keeps your message in front of your prospects on a daily basis. Unfortunately, vandalism is a problem in maintaining an intact ad and it can take a long time to have an impact.

Direct mail is the third most frequently used medium by the hearing aid specialist. In brief, it directs a message to a select audience; it has flexibility, personalization, and no direct ad competition. The weaknesses are the high cost and "junk mail" image.

The ultimate test of any advertising is determining its effectiveness.

How To Evaluate the Program

The Receiver, The Response and Feedback

The measurement of the success of the advertising campaign requires a return to the specific objectives originally stated for the campaign. Pretesting, post testing, and tracking are quantitative means of evaluating the program.

The three major means of pretesting ads are direct ratings, portfolio tests and laboratory tests. These are performed before the ad is actually placed in the media. The goal is to determine if the ad is communicating effectively. The direct ratings procedure presents alternative ads to a group of consumers and requests ratings regarding the ads' ability to influence or stimulate them to act.

Portfolio tests are also based on the presentation of a series of ads; however, the analysis focuses on understanding and remembering the message. The lab test measures the consumer's physiological reaction, i.e., perspiration, pupil dilation, heartbeat, blood pressure. These tests are more indicative of the attention-getting power of the ads.

These tests all act to screen out inadequate ads.

Post testing techniques include recall tests and recognition tests. These are performed after the ad has been run and individuals are asked to report whatever they recall from the ad. It measures the

ad's ability to be noticed and remembered.

The recognition test presents readers with the material, i.e., newspaper or magazine, and asks them to indicate which ads they recall seeing previously. Then further analysis is done regarding the ability to identify the product or service, and how much of the written material was actually read.

However, neither the pre or post test-

ing techniques assess the impact of advertising on sales, as there are so many other uncontrolled variables which can also affect sales. A frequently used technique is the historical approach, which compares sales before and after the onset of the advertising program. Comparative data on expenditure versus percentage of sales increase can also be indexed.

Focus group interviewing is a relatively inexpensive technique that can be

Dispensers Follow-Up Advertising Tracking Record

Name _____

For the month of _____

User Name Address, Zip	Date	Lead Source	Purchase?		Mdl.	B/M *	Style	User?	
			Yes	No				Old	New

Lead Source Key

- A = Ad F = Friend L = Letter from office
- Y = Yellow Pages W = Walkin O = Other
- * Binaural/Monaural

FIGURE 3

Sample Advertising Tracing Record Measuring the Effectiveness of Advertising Programs and Generating Leads

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goals have been achieved. This is why it is important to have specific quantifiable objectives rather than a generalization. The objective is not to "increase sales," but increase sales by X amount. With an established criterion, even though there are a number of uncontrollable variables which will affect business, a more knowledgeable assessment can be made.

Legal Regulations

There are a number of regulatory agencies to enforce the laws that have been promulgated to protect consumers. Legal constraints have a higher impact on advertising than on any other single component of the marketing mix.

Deception and bait and switch advertising particularly draw attention from the Federal Trade Commission. In this era of consumer protection the criterion for judging deception is the "perception" of ad claims rather than the literal meaning; i.e., the decoding part of the communication process. A basic knowledge of your state, local, and professional guidelines regarding advertising and professional conduct is requisite.

Summary

Advertising is a tool that is used to direct persuasive communications to target consumers. The ultimate purpose of advertising is to differentiate the hearing health care product or service and push out the demand curve. It is just one segment of the promotion portion of the marketing plan and should be coordinated with publicity, sales promotion and personal selling for maximum efficiency.

The advertising specialist must be an expert in communication via mass media,

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specializing in people and messages. The basic elements of a successful program include the establishment of clearly defined and measurable objectives, assignment of responsible personnel to direct the program, and provision of a specific budget.

The effectiveness of the program evolves from the communication process of: the source and message for determining what to say, who should say it, and to which audience; the channel for determining what medium will be most powerful in reaching the receiver, your target population; the response, your audience's reaction; and the feedback, the measurement of the reaction.

It is important to note that with all the interfering noise and increasing competition for the consumer's attention, the older population has become more sophisticated, distrusting, and cynical. Thus it is paramount to establish trust and demonstrate the realistic benefit of services provided by the hearing aid specialist. Advertising, when executed properly, is an exciting and powerful tool to include in your promotion arsenal.

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Measuring the Effect of an Advertising Campaign on Referrals

Percentage of MLRS Clients by Source of Referral

Month	Radio	Newspaper	TV*	Other	Total
July 1978	9.5	1	1.6	1.4	13.5
August	10.4	1.7	1.8	.9	14.8
September	16.5	1.3	3.7	0	21.5
October	11	1.6	2.8	0	15.4
November	12	2.6	2.7	0	17.3

*Public service announcements

FIGURE 4

(Reprinted with permission from Braun, I., "Building a Successful Professional Practice with Advertising," *AMACOM*, 1981, p.235)

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