



Market Knowledge

This article originally appeared in Irrigation and Green Industry Magazine

Effective Radio Advertising Programs for Contractors

Radio advertising is one of the most powerful ways to target a mass audience in your local market for a relatively low cost. You can reach potential customers at home, in their cars or even at the local barbershop.

The effectiveness of your radio campaign will depend on two factors: creating an attention-grabbing message and making an effective media buy.

Make sure your ad captures the listener's attention quickly, and clearly communicates the benefit of your company's product or service.

Whether you take a humorous or serious tone, your spot should be engaging, using music, narration and sound effects to create "word pictures" that capture the listener's imagination. For best results, consider using a professional scriptwriter, or take advantage of the station's announcers to do your narration. While doing your own radio spot could save money, your voice and intonation may be less effective than that of a pro. Besides, if you stick with the station's talent, they can record changes to your spot without you being there.

Your ad should mention your company's name a minimum of three times in a thirty-second spot and provide a means to contact you. For example, it could say "Grapids Irrigation, find us on-line at www.Grapids.com". This repetition will make sure the leads flow to you and not your competitors.

When selecting a station, it's no time to play favorites. You want one that reaches your target, not necessarily the one you listen to. Ask for a ratings breakdown that includes age, income and other factors. Many stations are part of larger conglomerates, so they may offer you the opportunity to target the same customer across different music formats.

Consider three factors when evaluating ad placements: reach, frequency and timing. Reach is the number of listeners within your target group who will hear each message. Your station can provide this statistical information. Frequency is, of course, the number of times per day or per week your message will be heard. Timing is important because more listeners will hear your ad if it runs during morning or evening "drive times" rather than if it runs at 3 a.m.

To capture listeners when they're really paying attention, consider sponsoring a portion of the hourly newscast. "Brought to you by Aquamist Lawn Sprinklers, which reminds you to put an end to hose dragging with an automatic system." With a sponsorship, you typically get a 'verbal billboard' at the beginning of the report as well as at the end.



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Don't ignore the possibilities with public radio. Because of the limited number of advertisers and excellent listener demographics, sponsoring public radio programs can be an excellent way to reach homeowners.

Join the many contractors who are discovering the relatively low cost and highly effective results of radio advertising. I'll be listening for your ad!

About the Author:

Jeff Carowitz is a leading expert on marketing for the green industry. As a consultant with Strategic Force, he works with manufacturers, wholesale distributors and contractors in developing marketing programs for profitable business growth.