

## White Paper 008

# How Often Should You Advertise?

Length of commitment is one of the questions advertisers often wrestle with when signing up for advertising. Some advertisers want to run one or two ads to gauge the effectiveness of the medium. We will tell them in all honesty they are wasting their money with this approach. To gauge the effectiveness of a particular medium we recommend at least six advertising insertions. Our theory behind at least six months of advertising is based on several reasons.

The first reason is that readers need to see a company's ad for at least six months to believe the company is part of the community and is serious about working in the area. According to the article, *How To Succeed With Newspaper Advertising*, the reason you want to advertise steadily is to build trust. "With newspaper advertising [and with all other types of media], Consistent Advertising = Familiarity = Trust = Customers. People won't buy from you until they trust you."

The author continues by saying, "Trust and confidence take time to build up. To be successful with newspaper advertising, you need persistence, patience, and a budget to keep your newspaper advertising running to build that trust."

"Your ad should appear in the same place in the newspaper at least weekly for an indefinite period [forever]. Expect to run your newspaper advertising for two months before you see an increase in sales. It takes some time to build trust. And if you quit, you have to start all over again. Don't waste your money starting a newspaper advertising program if you can't give it time to work."

The article discusses advertising in a weekly paper. So the author suggests at least eight insertions (once a week for two months). We find at least six insertions in a monthly paper is enough to begin to gauge the effectiveness.

Shari Waters at about.com states in her article, *Creating a Newspaper Advertisement*, "I believe a retail business needs to consistently run a newspaper advertisement. Even if it is a small business card type of ad, it's important to keep your brand out there in front of your customer. There are also many special events that warrant running an additional or larger display ad. Retailers don't have to wait until the store is having a sale to place an advertisement in a newspaper. Consider running an ad for the following: Grand Opening [;] Relocating [;] New Product Line [;] Hiring New Staff [;] Milestones (Store Anniversary, etc.)."

Waters continues in this vein by stating, "The more an ad is run, the more it [is] seen. The more the advertisement is seen, the more it is remembered. In other words, you should run an ad as often as your marketing budget will allow. It's been my experience that you should not even consider running an ad under 6 weeks, unless it is for a huge, one-time event. Take advantage of the discount prices offered by the news agency for long-term advertising."

## **How Often Should You Advertise? White Paper 008 Continued**

In his article, *Frequency Is the Key to Advertising Success*, Jeffrey Moses explains, “When designing and placing ads, many small business owners search for the magic bullet: an ad that is so compelling that customers will immediately pick up the phone and call to make an appointment.”

Moses further explains, “The reality is, however, that advertising is a process, not a one-time event. Advertising research has shown that a consumer usually needs to see an ad five to seven times before responding. This is what the ad industry calls the rule of seven.”

In the article Moses goes on to explain that, “When working with a limited budget, there’s always the choice of advertising frequently for a short period, or advertising infrequently over a longer period. It’s often better to spread an ad campaign out so that customers are continually seeing the ads, as opposed to saturating the media for one or two weeks and then not advertising again for a year.”

### **Measuring Effectiveness**

So how do you know your ad is working? It is important to measure the effectiveness of your advertising. I will go into different methods of measuring the effectiveness and return on investment in another article. But quickly, the best way is to ask.

When a customer contacts your company to inquire about your services, your phone person should ask them, “How did you hear about us?” If you own a retail store, “How did you hear about us?” is a question to ask while ringing up a sale. Keep a clipboard behind the counter with the different marketing methods you use listed on the paper along with “Word or mouth”, “Saw sign”, etc. Have the person who asks the question make a slash mark next to the appropriate answer. Also ask the information gatherer to record specific responses not on the sheet. You may be surprised to discover where your customers come from.

If you are an established store your customers may mention that they saw your ad in a particular paper. If not you might ask them what papers they read or receive and whether they have seen your advertising anywhere. If the majority of your customers read a certain paper, it is a good paper to investigate for advertising because it reaches your target market.

# # #

*How To Succeed With Newspaper Advertising* can be found at <http://www.myprofessionaladvertising.com/Newspaper%20Advertising1.htm>

*Frequency Is the Key to Advertising Success by Jeffrey Moses* can be found [http://www.nfib.com/object/3985727?\\_templateId=315](http://www.nfib.com/object/3985727?_templateId=315)

*Creating a Newspaper Advertisement by Shari Waters* can be found at [http://retail.about.com/od/marketing-salespromotion/a/create\\_news\\_ad.htm?p=1](http://retail.about.com/od/marketing-salespromotion/a/create_news_ad.htm?p=1)

---

For more information about advertising in Hamilton Publishing, LLC publications, please contact Customer Relations Manager Christine Gray at 480/654-4460 or by e-mail at [Customer\\_Relations@NearbyNews.com](mailto:Customer_Relations@NearbyNews.com)