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## Proof: Think Big, by Starting Small

Rob Reif, May 1, 2009



It is more crucial than ever for advertisers to make sure they are getting maximum bang for their buck. One way is to implement an effective geotargeted campaign. **Geotargeting, when done correctly, ensures that an advertisement will run where it is most likely to have an impact, as opposed to getting lost in the ether of an increasingly complex media landscape.** Of course, targeting local

markets is not quite as simple as cutting a check for a national broadcast buy, but it can pay big dividends.

Taking your message local does not mean abandoning that expensive national branding campaign. **It's important to stay consistent with your message, but by dovetailing your local and national efforts you'll capitalize on the strengths of each. Mass media should be used for brand building and big-picture initiatives. Use targeted ads to hammer the sale home in the local market.**

Another advantage of combining mass and targeted media is that it allows marketers to "pick their spots," so to speak. Just like when stocks crash on Wall Street in tough economic times, we're apt to see a flight to quality in the media market. **With smaller, more targeted buys, marketers can guarantee that their message is being disseminated through reliable media to a relevant audience. The overarching principle here is: Think national in scope, and local in implementation.**

If you're going to implement a targeted advertising campaign, identify those consumers who can be swayed by your message. This is where managing your budget comes into play. Spending wisely on market research and consumer analysis on the front end will give you the information you need to cut out wasteful spending in your buy.

Once you've identified target markets, tailor your message to cater to that specific audience. It can be as simple as including the phone number of a local sales rep, or promoting special deals to address the market competition, but it will speak volumes to the local consumer.

It's no secret that the advertising landscape has changed massively in recent years and a case can be made that new media

is most effectively leveraged at the local level. These platforms allow marketers to zero in on their target consumer more precisely than ever. Sure, you can still place an ad in their favorite magazine or run a 30-second spot on primetime TV, but now you can reach consumers when they're truly a captive audience, while searching the Internet or using their mobile phone. That's not to mention the fact that digital, mobile and even GPS-based advertising now makes targeting easier than ever.

**Reaching distinct local markets with audience-specific ads or customized creative used to be cost prohibitive. Now, with dynamic ad-serving technology, it's as easy as uploading new content to a Web site or punching in a different phone number or ZIP code.**

Targeted ads are more expensive because they're more effective, so **it's time to redefine your CPMs.** Understand that you are not simply paying to run an ad somewhere. **You're paying a premium to run the right ad, in the right place, for the right consumer. Savvy marketers will deploy their limited resources to the markets where they can have the biggest impact.** Rather than diluting your budget across multiple geographies and demographic groups, target strategically for a more potent buy.

At a time when budgets are finite, and getting smaller, don't set yourself up for failure. Test your targeted campaign in smaller markets at a manageable cost. If it's effective, you won't have any trouble convincing the rest of your management team to implement the program on a more widespread basis.

Not all advertising campaigns can be counted on for immediate return on investment. However, the results of a targeted advertising campaign can often be measured directly in the form of a local sales bump. It's important to identify those markets where your targeting is producing results, and use that information to protect your budget and validate your tactics. Even in the toughest economic climate executives won't eliminate a practice that's working.

Embracing these principles of targeted advertising will help your message resonate in this difficult economy. Of course, many other marketing strategies are equally effective, but **if your priorities are cutting waste out of the budget, and ensuring that your message reaches the consumer with maximum relevance and efficiency, then geotargeting is a perfect approach.**



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