

For A Successful Media Plan, ASK THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

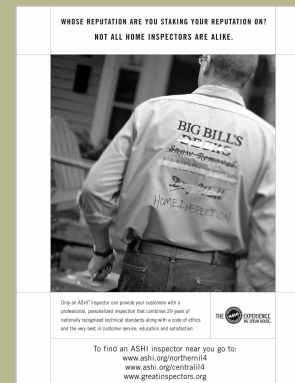
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Whether you or your chapter plan to spend tens of thousands of dollars or a few hundred dollars to reach a target audience, the questions that must be asked are exactly the same: Who do we need to reach? How often do we need to reach them? How much do we have to spend?

The answers to those questions will determine what advertising vehicles you can employ to successfully reach your

target audience.

As I indicated in the *ASHI Reporter* last October, radio, newspapers and magazines all are designed to reach large audiences (hence the term “mass media”), and they can be very effective, but also very expensive. Not everyone is a buyer or seller of homes, nor is everyone in the marketplace familiar with a home inspector or how to find one.



Above: Two ads developed jointly for Great Lakes, Central Illinois and Northern Illinois ASHI chapters.

Who is my target audience?

ASHI has identified the target audience as Adults 35 – 54 years of age, both male and female, with household incomes in excess of \$50,000, as the best-defined group of potential buyers/sellers due to mobility, financial security and historical precedent in the marketplace. So, if this is your clearly defined primary target, how do you reach them effectively?

How much do I have to spend?

As a general rule of thumb, don't spend any money on anything un-less you can justify the return on investment. No one has money to waste! If you have a small budget, think of highly targeted ways to reach out to your audience, such as direct mail, a booth at an industry conference, ads in a local real estate publication, publicity/public relations efforts about your chapter ▶▶▶

QUESTIONS continued

or company, etc. You may not be able to afford a radio campaign, newspaper ads, cable television or billboards, and that's okay. If you have a large budget (\$10,000+), then make sure you use the money wisely. Advertising success demands that you need both reach (the number of potential folks who will hear, read or see your efforts) and frequency (the number of times those same folks can hear, read or see your efforts). People have to see or hear an ad a minimum of 5 times on average just to remember that they saw it, not necessarily to act upon the message. So, to expect positive results from a single ad, or even a week's worth of advertising, is wishful thinking, and certainly will not provide the results you desire or make for a smart investment.

Where do I find help?

At the end of October, it will have been one year since ASHI employed SAVVY-Strategic Resource Partners to help with local media campaigns. We have had numerous success stories with a radio campaign in New England, print campaigns in Illinois and California, and helping chapters rewrite their brochure copy to make it more sales-worthy in Florida and Washington State. We provided copy for a cable television spot in Denver, and then the local company did an even better commercial than we imagined. And, perhaps most importantly, we told numerous ASHI chapters not to spend money where it would not serve their intended purpose.

SAVVY's agreement with ASHI will expire at the beginning of

November, but the services that we offer will still be available to chapters or individuals who are interested in getting professional expertise for their market.

For a review of existing media plans, the charge would be \$150. For SAVVY to build a media plan for your market, the cost can be as low as \$350, dependent upon the requirements, length of time to get approvals and begin implementation. If you decide to implement our custom-made media plan and allow us to place your advertising with the local media, there would be no cost to you on either media placement or conforming existing ads (print or radio) to fit the demands of local publications and/or adding local tags.

It has been a great pleasure to serve ASHI and its chapters over the past 12 months, and we hope to continue our service for those chapters or individuals who would like advice and/or placement on their media plans.

SAVVY-Strategic Resource Partners can be reached at Buzogany@savvysrp.com or by phone at 847-749-4012. Our Web site is www.savvysrp.com, and it will provide you with a snapshot of the services we perform for clients throughout this great country. ■

Buz Buzogany, principal, SAVVY-Strategic Resource Partners, is a former creative director for an advertising agency and worked in the television industry prior to moving into association management.

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