Ag Decision Maker

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# Evaluating Alternative Types of Advertising

Advertising, when properly understood, is a powerful tool for marketing. It can be most effective with products that can be differentiated from similar products based on consumer-accepted quality differences. However, regardless of the quality of a product's advertising, it is important to remember that a product has to compete on its own. For example, brand preference cannot be established if the product fails to meet consumer expectations.

Below are forms of advertising you may want to consider.

**1) Newspapers**

- Advantages – short lead time, flexible, reach large audience, community prestige, intense coverage, reader control of exposure, coordination with national advertising, merchandising service, segment consumer by geography.
- Disadvantages — short life span, may be expensive relative to other media, reading, poor reproduction, lack of creativity.

**2) Radio**

- Advantages – audio capacity, short lead time, low cost relative to other media, reach demographic and geographic segmented audience, reach large audience.
- Disadvantages – don't have visual capacity, fragmented and inflexible, temporary nature of message.

**3) Magazines and journals**

- Advantage — selectivity for demographic and geographic segments, high in quality reproduction, lasts as long as magazine is kept, prestigious advertisement if credibility of magazine is high, extra services, issue may be read by more than one person.
- Disadvantages – long lead time, lack of flexibility in gaining attention, often limited control over location of advertisement.

**4) Outdoor advertising**

- Advantages – inexpensive relative to other media, quick communication of simple ideas, repetition of exposure to customers, ability to promote products available for sale nearby.
- Disadvantages — brevity of the message, short exposure time, cannot target customer, public concern over esthetics.

**5) Television**

- Advantages — impact mass coverage, repetition, flexibility in getting attention of consumer, prestige, visual and audio capabilities, short lead time.
- Disadvantages — temporary nature of message, high cost relative to other media, high mortality rate for commercials, evidence of public distrust, lack of selectivity, hard to target customer, requires production specialists.

**6) Direct mail**

- Advantages – flexibility in reaching target audience, short lead time, intense coverage, flexibility of format, complete information, easy to personalize.
- Disadvantages — high cost per person, dependency on quality of mailing list, consumer resistance, may be considered as junk mail, may be difficult and expensive to access mailing lists.

*References*

*Bygrave, William D., The Portable MBA in Entrepreneurship. John Wiley & Sons Inc., 1994 p 108.*

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