Another Commercial? Don't Touch That Dial!

Watch & Learn

By Caroline Jordan, MBA

When commercials come on the television do you get up and head for the kitchen to get a snack? Do you tune out the radio when commercials start? Do you skip over advertisements in newspapers and magazines?

If you do, you're missing a golden opportunity for increasing your business.

When you pay attention to ads, you can very quickly pick out ads that are effective. How do you know?

*Do you understand from the ad "what's in it for you"?

*Does the ad make you want to find out more?

*Does the ad touch your emotions?

When you start to notice ads, and more importantly notice the effective ones, you can use those ads as a basis for your next ad campaign. When I see an ad in a newspaper or a magazine that I think really does a good job, I tear it out and put it into what marketers call a "swipe file." Now, that's not to say that you take someone else's ad and paste your name over theirs, and use it as though it's your own. Study it and try to define what it is that makes it a good ad. Then find a way to introduce similar aspects into your own advertising.

Here are a couple of examples from my local market…

A CPA firm ran an ad that said, "Your Profit is Our Business."

Okay, I understood where they were going with this. But, it made me feel uncomfortable—my profit isn't anybody's business but my own. Maybe that's just me and others took it in the spirit in which it was meant, but for me it didn't work.

A jeweler's ads say over and over "We really want to be your jeweler."

This is brilliant. I know beyond a shadow of a doubt that Stan Pollack really wants to be my jeweler. Actually, it's not me he wants as a customer—if he had me for a customer he'd starve. What Stan wants is to develop life long relationships with people who make multiple jewelry purchases. He does a great job of articulating that and repeating it over and over.

Now, if the CPA firm had said to me "Small Business Owners, Do You Want to Keep More of What You Make?" they would have been speaking my language.

Stop and check out the ads, watch a few commercials, tune into a late night infomercial and study the techniques they're using to attract their market. Which tactics could you apply in your own business? What message do your customers want to hear from you?

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