



Whether it's a new tagline, shock value or laugh-out-loud humor, some of the most powerful brands invest millions of dollars each winter to get their marketing messages in front of consumers during the most watched event of the year—the Super Bowl.

While small businesses may not have the marketing dollars to compete on a Super Bowl-caliber advertising scale, there are lessons to learn and mistakes to avoid when examining these advertisements.

CREATE AN ACTION IN THE AD

The general approach of integrating the Internet into marketing campaigns is becoming more prevalent each year. As technologies improve, customers become more accustomed to seeing websites as a major part of an ad. Directing customers to your website, a blog or a Facebook page will allow you to track the response to your ads and get feedback, hopefully translating to new business.

TARGET SPECIFIC AUDIENCES

Repeating successful campaign elements to an audience over time can help build your brand. Think of the audience you want and situations where you could have the repeated attention of essentially the same audience (or different audiences with similar demographics). This could be an annual event, a monthly meeting, a periodic publication, etc. Take down email addresses and send updates or ads about your company. Maintaining your campaign to the same or even a similar audience will create new opportunities in your business.

CREATING A SERIES

Companies need to be sure they don't focus all of their attention on a single ad. Tailoring your marketing campaign to the appropriate audience will give you much more mileage and likely will yield better results. It's important for your company to be as memorable as the ad that touts it. If you're launching a series of ads in an industry publication, you might be inclined to create something humorous—but make sure you don't forget to include

basic information like your contact information and website so you can be sure the audience can contact you. Also, be sure that your audience will appreciate your humor!

SUCCESS REQUIRES FOLLOW-UP

While your campaign may garner brand awareness, it doesn't only come from a single ad. Following up with calls or social media engagement with customers can be vital to growing buzz about your company. You then need to translate that buzz into sales.

Remember the big picture. Every ad you create should in some way stand on its own, but no commercial exists in a vacuum. Think about who you're trying to reach and what they're looking for as they read the newspaper or surf the Web. Then find a way to meet them where they are with a refreshing, respectful and timely message. Make your ads something that they welcome into their world rather than something they avoid. You—and they—will be glad you did.

About Sarah S. Berman, President, The Berman Group, inc. Sarah S. Berman serves as President of The Berman Group, a full-service marketing, public relations and special events firm based in New York City. The firm specializes in serving business-to-business clients in the real estate, construction and professional services industries. The firm's website can be found at www.bermangrp.com.