TV advertising on a limited budget

By Natasha Fourie

1 Nov 2019

"We can't afford to be on TV."

“The packages seem reasonable, but we can’t afford the production costs.”

“But is anyone really still watching TV? I thought everyone is streaming now.”

“We will consider advertising on TV when we are running a promotion, but it won’t be an ongoing strategy.”

“All our budget is going into our digital campaigns.”

Image credit: Enayet Raheem on Unsplash.

Advertising agencies working with small businesses and startups will probably recognise these sound bites. Are their concerns completely unfounded? Perhaps not, but armed with the correct information, TV can be a viable option for most businesses, and most definitely one that delivers ROI.

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2 Oct 2019

Let’s look at the facts first.

At least 95% of South Africans are still watching live TV, of which 21% watches more than five hours per day. So TV is a reach medium. And, as proven by many campaigns that we have tracked for digital brands in South Africa over the last few years, TV delivers significant performance in terms of website visits and conversions.

By mirroring what they do digitally on TV (running always-on campaigns), digital brands can scale their marketing efforts with campaigns that deliver real results based on business KPIs.

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But what about the budget?

Here’s how to make an impact on TV with a limited budget:

Make use of offers from TV media owners in traditionally ‘quieter’ times. The seasonality price index for South Africa shows that January to April are the most affordable months to advertise on TV since these are traditionally the months that fewer brands advertise.

Not only will you be in a less cluttered environment, but you will also spend less money – which gives you the opportunity to test TV at a lower price.

Use attribution software to optimise your TV campaigns. By knowing which channels, days, dayparts and creative perform the best for your business, you can plan your next campaign using those insights –resulting in less wastage.

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Cost-per-visit comes down by almost 70% when campaigns are planned using the information available through the software.

A TV ad does not have to be a big, expensive production with a live shoot. By creating an animated ad with an effective call to action at the end, you can create a very effective performance ad that will deliver against your business KPIs.

This also gives you the opportunity to easily (and cost-effectively) change the ending of the ad to be able to AB test which version performs better. If you use attribution software it will be easy to see which version of your ad brings the required results.

Use an agency to do media owner negotiations on your behalf to get better advertising rates and the right strategic recommendations.

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Agencies have knowledge of packages from media owners. By selecting the packages that best match your target consumer it can have a big impact on optimising your budget – you can get up to 80% discount.

Agencies can advise you on first-time advertiser benefits – you can get up to 50% added value on loose spots.

A few closing arguments:

Marketing people are sometimes tempted to use themselves as a sample for the rest of South Africa. Don't. If you prefer streaming to watching live TV, the same doesn't necessarily apply to the other 56 million people in South Africa.

Although it's good to keep your finger on the pulse in terms of trends, it's important to use research and statistics to back up your marketing decisions.

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Although it is tempting to only advertise in certain periods, these spikes are standard practice in brand campaigns. But when doing a performance campaign – with the key objective of driving traffic to your website or e-commerce platform – an always-on strategy that mirrors digital campaigns will deliver better results.

The effectiveness of TV and digital advertising combined should not be underestimated. By using both channels together, a campaign is more impactful as viewers interact with multiple touchpoints.

ABOUT NATASHA FOURIE

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