

Radio advertising: the power of sound

Hush Media create content for radio, TV, press and online. Mark Bryant, Creative Director, has produced radio advertising for thousands of companies, from SMEs to blue chip organisations. Here he talks about how to get the best from the medium.



I love working on the creative of a new radio campaign, it's so different and unique to other areas of the media; sound can be so powerful and moving.

Watch *Star Wars* with the sound muted and it completely loses its excitement. Play it back with your eyes closed, the

volume cranked up and your brain fills the gaps. But you're not just sat back watching it on screen - your imagination places you right there at the controls. Sound makes up more than 50% of the film, and without the powerful orchestra combined with the whizzes, bangs and

zaps it would be incredibly dull.

Thankfully, radio is much more cost-effective than the movie business. No need for extravagant sets or expensive special effects, your mind can generate its own images more powerful than anything you could physically create.

Simple mixes of music and sound effects transport listeners wherever you want. The heart beat of an unborn baby in its mother's womb, the roars of excitement on the terraces of a football stadium, or even directly to the middle of your company premises.

The presenters, programming, music and overall sound of each radio station is designed to engage the listeners, to make them feel that it's all being broadcast to, and for, them and them alone. Radio advertising, when done properly, can seem

like a personal recommendation from a trusted friend, a referral. And we all know the importance of personal referrals.

The lack of visuals means that people can listen to the radio whilst doing other tasks. This means your message can invade their consciousness at key moments. What other advertising medium can make people think about buying a new car whilst they're driving in their current clapped out banger? Or encourage people to consider a new cleaning product whilst they're scrubbing away at their worktops?

Every good radio campaign starts with a good brief: Who? What? And Why?

Firstly, WHO are we talking to? In other words, what's the ideal target market?

Now, WHAT do we want them to do? A single call-to-action,

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such as calling a telephone number, visiting a website, or even the company premises - but not all three

And finally, WHY do we want them to do it? The unique selling point (USP). What makes this business different from its competitors?

During the creation of the commercial, there are 3 very important elements: voice, music and sound effects. It's not necessary to use them all, it's how they are used which is most important.

The tone of a voiceover can say a lot about a business. It doesn't matter how great the

offer is, if a voiceover is shouting in their delivery it's much harder for the listener to make a connection than if he/she was actually chatting to us, as in general everyday conversation.

Celebrity voiceovers can help establish quality and trust very

quickly. Just imagine Jeremy Clarkson talking about your latest car range, or Gordon Ramsay advertising your restaurant.

Music is very good at stirring emotions, different compositions can make you happy, make you cry, or even frighten you. So finding the right track is another important element to your campaign's success.

Having music specially composed is an excellent method of branding. Hear the first few notes of "Where in the world" I'm sure you find yourself singing "PC World". McDonalds is another prime example with their sonic identity "Ba-da-ba-



ba-bah... I'm loving it" almost as famous as the golden arches themselves.

As with any form of advertising, it pays to be consistent and it's often best to use the same music and voiceover on each campaign to help build familiarity and as a result a relationship with the listener.

So forget the smoke and mirrors, if you create the right audio image for your company, by really engaging with the listener, the rewards can be immense!



CONTACT: For more information on radio advertising, call Hush Media on **0845 686 1234** or visit **www.hushmedia.co.uk/radio**

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