

INSTANT HOLIDAY CAMPS FORMULA

Advertising Transcription

Once you've got the venue organised, now you can start spreading the word about your fabulous holiday program. Advertising is probably in the top three of the biggest expenses you'll encounter in running holiday camps, but it needn't be enormous. It is also an area where too often you'll see people make huge mistakes, spending a fortune on what they think will draw people in but in reality produces very little result. It's very disappointing. Here what you'll find are my tried and tested and statistically proven ways that advertising can be more effective.

There are many ways of advertising your camps, but what we really want to focus on here is not how you advertise, but what your advertising consists of. That's more important quite often.

A couple of years ago, I flew to interstate to learn from a master of copywriting. Copywriting is the text, the word side of advertising. This mentor taught me that it is the text that sells, not fancy images or logos, despite what we might think. Words are what carry an emotional attachment that, when used really well, will sell rings around a glossy image. And it's been proved - there have been many in-depth studies researching what type of advertising results in the most sales.

This copywriting guru taught me that words are a more powerful selling tool than pictures, and he pointed to newspapers as an example. As you pass the newsagents on the way to pick up your morning coffee and you see that newspaper out the front, it is the headline that first captures your eye. The image is what your eyes are drawn to secondary. And they found, that the stronger the headline, the direct correlation to newspaper sales of that day. But let's test this ourselves and do a little experiment.

What I'd like you to do is choose two different ads from a magazine, nice big whole page advertisements. The first will be predominately image based, a lovely, sexy, glossy picture, something with very little text and not much free space on the ad. The other to contrast, an ad which features a really strong worded headline in very big, bold text with a lot of surrounding white space. There might be some pictures down below but the text is really prominent. Rip them out and then find a friend to be your guinea pig in testing this theory. Keep the ads hidden while you sit in front of them, then ask your friend to close their eyes while you hold up both ads in your hands. When you are ready, tell them to open their eyes and tell you which of the ads drew their attention first. Which of the ads were their eyes instantly drawn to? Try it and see, it's an interesting result.

Now, this is also my tried and tested method of deciding which advertising draft to use. I draw up a whole lot of different varieties with different text, different images, different layouts and the one that captures the attention of the eyes first is the one I send off to the printer. And you can do the same.

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When you have finished listening to this track, have a look at the templates disk, which contains samples of my advertising. You will notice that they are not very fancy. They were not designed by a graphic designer who charged me hundreds of dollars. I did them myself. And they worked. Why? Because I stated a very strong, assertive message in a big bold text. We Give Kids Confidence. Four words, that's it. But it wasn't until I saw my ads printed in school newsletters, I could really fully understand why they were being so effective. So many other designs were either jam packed with text going on about every little detail that there was no white space on the page, it was so crammed. Or, they were so overly designed with pretty little fairies dancing about or big swirls and things. And this is expensive space that you're paying for and it's being used up by graphic design icons – and this isn't going to help you sell your services. My ads, in comparison, were vastly different. Let's say you have a whole page school newsletter, with four quarter page ads on it. If you did the close-your-eyes-then-open-them test I told you about earlier, it was my strong, bold ad that was your eyes first point of contact. You get pretty much one chance to capture your customers attention, and you need to give it your best shot. White space is one of the keys to this, because it a really important aspect that people overlook. White what draws your attention in, it's what attracts your eyes first. So be sure not to overload your ads.

When you are designing your ad, make a strong statement based upon your niche market. Decide what you stand for, and make sure it's nothing wishy-washy. Before I studied advertising by going to weekend workshops and reading books, and building relationships with business mentors, the best in their field in advertising, my business slogan was "For Kids Who Want To Have Fun". And I look back now and think; well all kids want to have fun - duh. That tells people who are looking at my ads NOTHING about my business and that what I do that is different from everyone else. Your statement has to reflect what they are going to receive by attending your camp - not what they are going to do. Because chances are you might be doing similar things, but it is what they will receive that will be different. Big difference. It's the difference between selling the features of the camp (amazing showcase, disco party, singing the coolest songs) and the benefit of attending the camp, what they will have after they've left (confidence, the feeling of being famous rock stars, skills in the new dance craze that they can only get from you).

Once you have found your statement (this strong claim that you really believe in and that sets your business apart) once you have found your statement keep it. Please don't go changing it every holidays. What is important is repetition over time. Let's think about the L'Oreal statement "Because You're Worth It". They're not mentioning anything about their variety of lipstick shades there, it tells you how you will feel once you wear the lipstick and this same statement has been used for decades. They've reinforces it. Let's think of another one. Can you think of Nike's statement? Just Do It, right? They're stating that if you wear their shoes, you've got the ability to go out and conquer anything. They've given you the ability. It's a great example of a really strong statement, one that

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is reinforced time after time after time so that it is globally known.

Now let's talk about what you are trying to achieve from this advertisement. I think this is another key area that will dramatically improve your advertising results. What do you want people to do when they see your ad? Do you want people to be driven to call you? Pick up the phone and speak to you in person? Do you want them to rock up on the day of the camp, knowing where it is, how much it costs, whether to bring lunch, they know everything they need to know? Do you want them to be directed to your website to get more information? Let's focus on the third. Your website is (or very soon will be once we're done) your very best selling tool. In the ad, provide just enough information to engage their attention that stating something is just irresistible to them, the benefit is remarkable for attending the camp - not the features. These words need to call the reader to action, we want to send them instantly to your website, to get more information, going to answer all their questions so they can sign up. Once they get there, your website will pull out the big guns - we'll talk about this in a later track. But for now, you know that the website will easily and visibly provide all the information to answer all their questions as well either an online enrolment form or a PDF downloadable form so they can come and enroll in one swift motion. Make it super easy. To achieve this, put the website of the ad in big bold text down the bottom of your print advertisement and if you really want, the phone number make that like a secondary headline under the website, smaller font, not so big. Remember, the whole point of what we are aiming to achieve is to take you out of the loop, and if you're answering 50 phone calls a day, you're chained to the desk. We want to free up your time and letting your sales machine run itself by automation. This is all part of the leveraging goal, which is what I am totally passionate about for you.

Now unless you are running camps in at least 10 locations every holidays I would advise NOT to place advertisements in magazines or newspapers, even local ones. Why? In my opinion they are ridiculously expensive and you are often not directly targeting your niche market. You are probably getting more grannies than the busy working mother reading the local newspaper and that is not going to help you make sales. Online directories are great in terms of branding your business, but still in my experience from my research they overall provided less than 20% of the leads.

Considering the high cost, I would probably wait until you have a few venues up and running to justify spending that kind of cash in the start up stage. But going forward, it is vital that you are present in online directories.

The absolutely most cost effective way to reel in customers to your business is to advertise in school newsletters. And it's so easy. Call up all the schools in a 15km radius of your camp and tell them you are running a children's performing arts holiday camp and that you would like to place an advertisement in the newsletter. Some schools do not charge anything for this service and it allows you to get directly to your target market. I have paid anywhere from \$15 to \$60

INSTANT HOLIDAY CAMPS FORMULA

for a whole page ad, and much, much less for half and quarter page. \$60 for a whole page advertisement, which directly reaches 400 families of your niche market, is money well spent, as opposed to \$600 for the size of a business card in a newspaper. Another option is to print brochures yourself and ask for the school to distribute them to all students. If the school doesn't allow newsletter advertising to businesses, generally, most will be willing to do this for a small handling fee. Again, to get a brochure into the hand, or the backpack really, of 400 families directly in your target market for \$20 is an absolute bargain. Now I've done a little time saving, leveraging tip for you is to do up an excel spreadsheet for each venue you have. I have added in the templates an example advertising database template that you can start filling in. This means that the next holidays when the advertising time rolls around again, which it does faster and faster it seems, you aren't downloading price guides or scouring websites. It lists the school, the contact who you are treating like your best friend, the sizes available for advertising, the relevant costs and the email address you send the artwork too. Do the work once and save time over and over again. This is leveraging, ok. You Build that ladder once and then just climb the tree to collect the apples year after year.

I'm not sure, did you pick up on how I was able to give you specific statistics from my advertising experience? The most important thing to remember from this track on advertising is that testing is vital, absolutely critical to your success. Please, don't take my word for the effectiveness of what I have suggested. Test it yourself. Try out different versions with different text and images - see what creates the most brilliant result. Then, once you've mastered this, know exactly where your leads are coming from and where your money is being best spent. Then next camp you can stop spending money on advertising in places that aren't producing any result and instead pour more into the winners. And my last tip for testing your advertising is chat to the parents, it's one of the most beneficial things you can do for your business. Strike up a conversation in the afternoon after the camp, when they are not dashing off to work. Ask them what they think of your statement and how your advertising caught their attention.

It's very important on the camp application form, have a tick box where they state how they found out about your camp. Then you will be able to tally where your leads are coming from and develop these avenues further. Please stop spending money on a newspaper advertisement if you are getting 80% of your leads from school newsletters. Instead, send your money to where it will work for you, bringing in the business and new customers like a fishing trawler, instead of a hand line.