

BRANDING!

...the growth of your company depends on it

How Long is the Race?

Excerpt from *Secret Formulas of The Wizard of Ads* by Roy H. Williams



Now tell me this: how long do you plan to be in business? Are you going for the hundred-meter dash, or would you like to be in the lead at the end of the marathon? Oh, really? Then why do you advertise as though this weekend were the last time your customers will ever have the opportunity to buy from you?

Short term advertising — the sprint — is a race for fools. As a marketing strategy, it's self defeating to train your customers to sit on the sidelines waiting for your next "Moonlight Madness Sale." You should be conditioning them to think of you automatically whenever they need what you're selling.

Here are the runners:

1. Newspaper is a sprinter, an information-delivery vehicle that reaches only those buyers who are in the market for the product *right now*. Though the advertiser pays to reach all readers, the only people who will see a newspaper ad are those who are looking specifically for what's being advertised. You'll see immediate results from your newspaper ads — but you'll have escaped the attention of those who are not consciously in the market for your product or service.

2. The Yellow Pages are like the weekend jogger, thudding along with no particular goal in mind. They're a service directory for shoppers who have no preference, when people don't know who to call, they pull out the Yellow Pages. As an advertiser, do you really want to take your chances as a face in the Yellow Pages crowd? The highest goal of advertising is to convince the customer of your worth long before he needs what you sell.

3. Sound — intrusive, irresistible sound — makes electronic media the long distance runner of advertising. Broadcast wins the hearts of customers *before* they're in the market for your product. If your goal is to be the first into the mind of your customer when he needs what you sell, and to be the company he feels the best about, you should invest in the intrusive nature of sound with the reliability of echoic retention

I'm always fascinated by people who say "I tried advertising in electronic media, and it didn't work for me." Invariably, their tests were conducted according to rules that highly favored newspaper. They were looking for a quick payoff, and newspaper is definitely the best sprinter: you get what you get immediately, but it doesn't get better and better. Radio and television are marathon runners — the longer you continue, the better they work. They're a better investment in the long run than newspaper or Yellow Pages ads.

If you want to gamble on who's going to be in the lead at the end of thirty days, put your money on newspaper to win. But if your race is scheduled to run longer than six months, mortgage the house to buy TV and radio. It's only in the longer races that marathon runners show us what they've got.

When, Why, and How to Use Print Media

Direct Mail: Justifiable when used for sending invitations to a private event, or for sending follow-up materials to a customer who has requested them

Magazine: Trade magazines can be very effective when you need to reach a small number of people scattered across a large geographic area — for example, an ad in a making trade magazine to sell software for running a bank (Write the words first, then support the words with pictures — never the other way around).

Outdoor: Imagine a black billboard with white letters: "We'll leave the lights on for ya." No logo, just the recall cue. When you have an echoic recall cue that is deeply established, outdoor advertising can be a very low-cost way to rigger the memory of your broadcast ads.

Newspaper: When you absolutely have to dump excess inventory or when you need time to raise cash for an emergency but don't want to train your future customers to wait for your next sale, run a quarter to half page ad in the newspaper. Make the product, price, and time limit very large and bury the name of your company in small print at the bottom. Only those readers who are immediately in the market for your product will be reached.

WMAY
HOT TALK 97.0

WNNS
Lite Rock 99

WQLZ
92.7 the rock station

the river
springfield's modern rock 97.7