

Retaining, attracting newspaper advertisers

Newspapers must find inventive ways to retain and attract advertisers and community newspapers may have the answer, as they have not followed the declining print trend.



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“Historically, creative opportunities in print have been limited,” says Spark Media’s strategic marketing services director, Justine Williams. “Clients have challenged us to become more creative, more impactful and to deliver new ways of creating lasting impressions on readers.”

In 2016, it launched its Print Fashion Week campaign, introducing print innovations to the advertising community after investing heavily in the technology to cater to the changing industry requirements. In a short period, the company was able to print unique codes on individual inserts, offer die cuts, layered inserts, bellybands, Powerwraps and the popular Powernote, which opened up a world of opportunities for advertisers.

“As with Fashion Week in the clothing industry, the industry’s top designers present their latest collections associated with sexiness, allure and creativity,” explains Williams. “These characteristics aligned perfectly with what we wanted to achieve and attribute to these print innovations.

“During Print Fashion Week, agencies across South Africa were shown the possibilities when it came to creativity, inventiveness and flair. It was all about jazzing up classic print with dashing layers, trendy jackets and chick belly bands.”

Clients’ responses

Belinda Kayton from The MediaShop said, “I love the layered inserts. We use inserts for our retail clients – it is a stand-out because inserts work for us and are important to us.” The cutout provides interaction and she loves the fact that the reader can actually become part of the advert. “Isn’t that the point of it?”

Sean Sullivan from The MediaShop enjoys the flexibility inherent in the various innovations and the additional impact they provide, making their clients really ‘stand out’.

Do these print innovations deliver tangible results? According to the head of a national electronics retailer, most definitely, after the brand experienced the best December in years after using the Powerwrap. Another client testimonial of the print innovation success reported that the Powerwrap increased its headache powder’s share growth by just less than 10% and was the perfect supplement to its radio campaign.

The proven importance of a local print presence was recognised by a client who noted, “the week that you are not in the community newspapers and your competitors are, you stand the chance of losing between 15 to 20% in turnover.”

“Print Fashion Week and our innovation in print have been extremely successful and has accounted for additional R5m in revenue, generating at least 24 additional campaigns,” concludes Williams. “Just like the hottest fashion couture, local print media keeps delivering and innovating, clearly negating the perception that print is dying.”

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