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William "Willy" Riverón,
CEO de EAG.

LAS CLAVES DE SU ÉXITO

Con 35 años en la industria del marketing, la trayectoria en publicidad de Willy Riverón comenzó mucho antes de fundar Executive Advertising Group (EAG) en 1999. La industria publicitaria está en constante cambio, y la capacidad de pivotar, asegura el éxito de los clientes y del sector.

WILLY RIVERÓN SHARES THE KEYS TO HIS SUCCESS IN ADVERTISING WITH EAG



"Build strong and meaningful relationships because no one succeeds alone. Collaboration and support from others in the industry will be key to your growth," said William.

William "Willy" Riverón, founder of the agency Executive Advertising Group (EAG).

With 35 years in the marketing industry, William "Willy" Riverón's advertising career began long before he founded Executive Advertising Group (EAG) in 1999. By age 23, he was already working for a variety of media outlets—television channels, cable networks, and a major Spanish-language weekly in South Florida owned by Chicago's Tribune Company, a subsidiary of the *Sun-Sentinel*.

Those 10 years in media sales taught him the fundamentals of the industry, and he quickly earned a reputation as a tireless worker who always brought in clients and delivered results. But beyond sales skills, there was a creative side that he wanted to bring to light. He had an instinct for what resonated with audiences and a clear vision for how messages could capture attention and create impact.

The combination of sales experience, creative intuition, and a deep understanding

of the media made the transition to creating his own agency an easy one. When he founded EAG, he focused on his ability to build strong relationships, make a lasting impression, and, most importantly, deliver creative and effective messages. Whether in print, outdoor, radio, or television, he always had a special instinct for designing messages that worked. From straightforward ads to more complex and entertaining campaigns, his creative approach always produced results. This instinct and strategic vision not only set EAG apart but also helped it become an award-winning agency, recognized for effectiveness and impact at a local level.

One of his first successes at EAG was through long-form infomercials. The half-hour segments allowed them to tell deeper stories, connecting with audiences in a meaningful way. He created a niche by buying airtime in bulk and reselling it to other agencies, positioning EAG as a unique

resource in the industry. This entrepreneurial approach established a solid foundation and allowed Riverón to offer clients something different: value, creativity, and reach. His early focus on long-form content laid the groundwork for EAG's growth and cemented it as a leader in the industry.

When the financial crisis hit, he once again found himself needing to pivot to other formats. Traditional clients, such as auto retailers, were struggling, and Willy Riverón realized he had to reinvent his approach. He shifted his focus to industries that could withstand economic downturns: bankruptcy attorneys, loan modification companies, and education. These sectors helped people rebuild their lives, mirroring the reinvention EAG was experiencing. This shift was essential to getting through the crisis and helped set the stage for the company's next transformation.

The New Digital Age

Then came the digital age, which demanded a new reinvention. It wasn't just about adding digital capabilities; it needed to fully integrate them with the expertise EAG had in traditional media. They understood early on that a truly effective agency needed to combine digital, social, TV, radio, and even print into a cohesive mix. Relying on digital alone doesn't create the familiarity and trust needed for long-term success. Being on the first page of Google doesn't guarantee engagement, especially with so many competitors in the same space.

By balancing digital and traditional media, EAG created a "balanced advertising diet" that builds credibility, generates engagement, and keeps clients top of mind with their audiences. Advertising isn't just about "call now"; it's about building lasting relationships with consumers, and EAG's comprehensive approach ensures that clients achieve that connection.

One of the most innovative services EAG offers is the pay-per-results model, known as "per inquiry." This direct-response-based service allows clients to pay only for results, like a pay-per-click model, but focused on calls generated by ads across multiple media. This model was transformative for clients with limited budgets, giving them a cost-effective way to grow. This marketing method was used to transform United States Medical Supply from a 300-member Medicare provider to a national powerhouse with 600,000 members.

Riverón's journey with EAG has been one of constant adaptation, learning, and reinvention. From its roots in media sales and long-form infomercials to digital integration and innovation in pay-per-performance models, EAG has always sought new ways to be at the forefront of industry changes and economic challenges.

EAG is very focused on the Hispanic market. Although it is a multicultural agency that works with all types of markets, its greatest experience and practice have always been with the Hispanic and Latino community. From the beginning, most media purchases have been on channels such as Univision and Telemundo, although they also work with NBC and CBS when needed.

The advice that Riverón shares today after his vast experience is the following: "Never settle. Success in advertising is not about relaxing; it is about staying hungry, being agile, and always being ready to pivot when necessary. That mentality has driven



"The future of advertising in a digital world is about creating multiple points of contact and building connections," said William Riverón.

EAG for 25 years, and it is the foundation to which I remain committed as we move into the future."

Recently, we had the opportunity to interview William directly from his offices in Miami.

Negocios Magazine: What was the biggest challenge you faced when founding EAG, and how did you manage to overcome it?

William Riverón: The biggest challenge when founding EAG in 1999 was taking a leap of faith. I left a stable job where I was successful and earned a good income to start from scratch, without loans, support, or the resources of a larger company. It was just me, my business card, and my determination. I knocked on doors, selling myself and my skills, and started with small achievements, like earning a \$15 commission on my first sale: an ad on a bus bench for a golf shop.

The financial pressure was immense. The bills were piling up, and my savings were quickly depleted. I had to learn everything: from management to creating ads in areas I had no experience in, while balancing stress and staying motivated. I worked long hours, often researching and asking for

advice late into the night. Humility was key; I wasn't afraid to admit what I didn't know and sought help from people with more knowledge than me.

Perseverance was my greatest strength. Despite the challenges, I believed in myself and kept going, managing to build something from nothing. Over time, those small achievements added up, and with hard work and the support of good people along the way, I managed to build a foundation for success.

NM: What aspects do you consider essential to building and maintaining strong client relationships over the years?

WR: Building and maintaining strong client relationships over the years requires trust, communication, and the consistent delivery of results. Clients need to feel valued and heard, so actively listening to their needs and being responsive is critical. Transparency is also important – whether discussing challenges or celebrating successes, honesty fosters long-term loyalty.

Another key factor is going above and beyond expectations. Offering creative solutions, staying proactive, and adapting to their evolving goals demonstrates

commitment to their success. Finally, relationships thrive on mutual respect and a personal connection, so treating clients as partners and not just accounts create a foundation for long-lasting collaborations.

I think one thing that sets us apart is that we know how to connect with Hispanic audiences in a more authentic way. For example, in bilingual campaigns, we've tailored messaging based on cultures: in English, maybe we feature golf, while in Spanish we use dominoes.

NM: How do you see the future of advertising in an environment where digital continues to dominate?

WR: The future of advertising in a digital world is about creating multiple touchpoints and building connections. While digital platforms are essential, I believe traditional and digital advertising can and should coexist. The digital environment often acts as the final funnel where all efforts converge, but relying solely on being on the first page of Google—competing with 13 similar results—does not guarantee success.

The key is synergy. Imagine a balanced campaign that includes radio, television, outdoor and print, along with your digital efforts. A potential customer might hear your message on the radio while driving, see your billboard, and then watch your TV ad. When they search online, your name will stand out thanks to the familiarity and trust you've built across multiple channels. This multi-channel strategy not only increases the chances of conversion, but it also boosts the effectiveness of each individual medium.

For example, a radio ad alone might generate one call, but when combined with other channels, that same ad could generate three or four calls, because people are already familiar with your brand. Each medium reinforces the others, creating exponential results. Your TV works better because it's supported by outdoor ads; your outdoor ads work better because of radio, and so on. Each channel benefits from synergy, maximizing your reach and impact.

This comprehensive approach drives growth by ensuring that each touchpoint works together to build trust, familiarity, and recognition. By leveraging a combination of traditional and digital advertising, campaigns operate at full capacity, delivering better results and positioning your brand ahead of competitors who rely solely on the digital environment and remain unknown to their audience. In today's world, it's not about choosing between one or the other, but about creating a cohesive and integrated

strategy that leverages the strengths of each platform.

NM: How has client response to the pay-for-performance model evolved?

WR: Clients have always responded positively to the payment-by-results model because it minimizes risk and reduces costs. The pay-for-performance model minimizes risk and reduces costs. It's a simple, transparent system: we provide a TV spot to a station, but instead of paying upfront for airtime, we only pay when the ad generates a call to a dedicated phone number unique to that station. This transfers some of the risk to the TV station, creating a partnership dynamic rather than a simple advertising transaction.

This model thrives because it takes advantage of unsold inventory—that is, airtime that stations need to fill. With so many TV and cable stations across the country, there is always a constant demand for this approach.

The beauty of this system lies in its efficiency. By working with call centers to pre-qualify prospects, we ensure that the results we deliver are high quality. It's not just about volume; it's about generating meaningful prospects that convert into customers.

In practice, a client could benefit from millions of dollars in airtime, but only pay a fraction of that if the results meet expectations. For example, a campaign could generate \$1 million in the media but cost only \$200,000 if that is the value of the leads generated. This model is a win-win, as it offers cost-effective advertising for the client and revenue opportunities for TV stations with unused inventory.

NM: What advice would you give to new agencies looking to stand out in this market?

WR: The best advice I can give to new agencies looking to stand out in this market is to start with an unwavering belief in yourself. Confidence and perseverance are essential because the road will be challenging. Don't give up, even when things seem overwhelming. Success in this industry requires a unique value proposition—something special that sets you apart from the competition. Take the time to identify your strengths and turn them into a clear offer that clients can't ignore.

Do your research. Understand your market, your customers, and their needs better than anyone else. Build strong, meaningful relationships because no one succeeds alone. Collaboration and support from others in the industry will be key to



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your growth. Surround yourself with people who can guide, advise, or help you, and don't hesitate to ask for help.

Work harder than everyone else. Consistency and effort are what separates those who succeed from those who don't. Focus on what you do best and continually improve. Once you find your niche, relentlessly iterate and hone it to scale your business. Deliver exceptional results and let those results build your reputation.

Finally, stay adaptable. The advertising industry is constantly changing, and the ability to pivot, embrace innovation, and seize new opportunities will ensure that you not only survive, but thrive in this competitive market. Dedicate yourself to excellence, and over time, your agency will grow into something truly extraordinary.

Report: Sebastian Marin Jaramillo
Photos: Courtesy of EAG

HISPANIC TIME

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