

Radio Advertising: Should Your Business Try It?

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If you think good old AM/FM radio is dead, think again.

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Here's a mind-blowing stat: According to the latest ratings data from Nielsen, AM/FM radio reaches more people each week than any other medium in the U.S., including TV, smartphone videos, streaming radio and podcasts.

Overall, some 228.5 million consumers tune in to AM/FM radio at least once a week—more than the 203.8 million who use the web and/or apps on a smartphone. Radio's reach also surpasses the 216.5 million people who watch TV, 127.6 million who watch video on a smartphone, 68.5 million who stream audio and 35.7 million using satellite radio, reports Nielsen's new survey [Audio Today 2018: How America Listens](#).

What's more, all generations, demographics and ethnicities are tuning in to AM/FM radio. The medium's monthly reach encompasses 95% of those aged 18 to 34, 97% of Generation X and 98% of baby boomers, Nielsen reports. Perhaps that's why Nielsen describes AM/FM radio as the "blue blazer" of marketing — while its image may be somewhat dated, it's still appropriate for a wide variety of situations.

Radio Advertising Builds Brands

The radio is an ideal medium for brand building. Repetition is key to increasing brand awareness, and because radio is so affordable, you can air your ads multiple times without breaking your budget.

According to the report [Radio: The Brand Multiplier](#), radio advertising was shown to increase share of mind, create stronger brand associations in prospects' minds than TV advertising, and build brand awareness among a wider audience. The study showed that TV-only advertising boosted brand awareness by 23%, but adding radio advertising to the mix increased brand awareness by 29%.

Radio advertising is relatively low-cost compared to other broadcast media — one reason so many radio commercials are promoting local businesses. With average [radio advertising](#) costs about one-third the price of equivalent television advertising time, using radio can make your advertising and marketing campaigns more cost-effective.

Unlike other forms of advertising, such as print magazine or newspaper ads or digital ads where your message can get lost in the clutter, on radio your ad stands alone, connecting directly with the prospect in a uniquely personal way.

Radio ads are comparatively easy to put together in a short timeframe. That means you can take advantage of opportunities quickly or create additional ads to bolster a successful campaign.

How to Maximize Results From Radio Advertising

If you decide to give radio advertising a try, follow these tips:

1. **Choose the right radio format for your target market.** Yes, radio does reach everyone from urban Hispanic teens to rural Caucasian grandmothers, but the two audiences probably listen to very different radio formats. Identify the stations your target market listens to, whether that's country music (the number-one format overall among radio listeners aged 18 to 54) or news radio. Contact the stations for data about their listeners. The better a station is at reaching your target customers, the more effective your ads will be.
2. **Be memorable.** You'll want to create a couple of different variations on your radio advertising, but use consistent catch phrases, themes and voices to make your ads memorable after they're off the air. Easy-to-remember vanity phone numbers and online landing page URLs ("Visit [mybusiness.com/WPRC](#)") will help prospective customers remember and reach your business.
3. **Be authentic.** Make the most of your direct connection with listeners to emphasize your authenticity as a small business owner. Voicing your own ads can be a great way to build recognition and promote your small business roots.

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