

What Makes a Radio Commercial Effective?

In one sentence A clear and concise message that drives the listener to do what you ask of them makes a radio commercial effective.

Vague: Yes, True: Very. Radio commercials are effective when this principal is put into play in a very targeted manner at a very targeted audience.

Bottom line, one size does not fit all when it comes to radio commercials. You need to know what you want to offer, and who you are offering it to. If you think you will save money by showcasing "EVERYTHING" in one commercial, you will be in for an expensive surprise, your message will not be targeted and won't move anyone to take action after hearing your radio commercials. Why? Because chances are your competition stated much more clearly than you, the benefits of a specific product or service that they too offer, in effect it spoke directly to the consumer who needed it in their radio commercials. Where as the "Everything" approach got lost in the shuffle.

Sure, you may have an array of services or products that are amazing! But chances are, the consumer who hears your message is only interested in one of those services or products. If you want their business, they need to be aware that you offer it, and offer the best. If you want to focus on more than one product or service, than create more than one commercial to effectively communicate this point. In a perfect world, every time your commercial plays the consumer will drop everything they are doing, stop talking to whoever they are talking to, and devote 110% of their attention to your radio commercial, every word in your radio commercial and the lovely background music you picked out. However, we don't live in that world. They will catch the commercial in small "snack size" pieces. The piece they catch, better be what you wanted them to hear.

For example: If you are an office supply store and want to let the public know about your sale on ink cartridges, 90% of your commercial better be about ink cartridges, the other part about where you are and how to contact you. However all too often when this hypothetical store wants to push ink cartridges they create a commercial that is 10% for ink cartridges, 10% for software, 10% for cell phones, 10% for office furniture, 10% for sharpies, etc!. Not only will the consumer (who could really take advantage of the ink cartridge sale) not have any clue about the sale, they also tuned out the rest of the message because they had no need for the other product blurbs in the radio commercial. Had the commercial focused on their goal of showcasing "ink cartridges", they would have likely known about the sale and made a note to go to this store.

Not only does the commercial need to be focused, it needs to be compelling. Just saying "We have ink cartridges on sale", is not enough. Radio commercials needs it needs to be relatable. The consumer needs to be put in a mental situation where they say to themselves "Oh yea! I know what they are talking about, I really need Ink Cartridges too". This can be done through humor, scripted situational acting, a offer that is too good to pass up or a strong call to action, or the announcer making a compelling ploy that does not sound like he's selling a product. Don't just rely on the radio stations "free" production services to get you the effective script you need (most times, you get what you pay for). Making a relatively small investment and hiring a professional radio commercial production company can pay off 10x in the long run as compared to having an unqualified "free" production service do your commercial for you. If you're going to spend money on a radio schedule, wouldn't you want to put the most effective message possible on the air?

So to review An effective radio commercial consists of a clear and concise message: targeted at exactly the person you want to reach for the product or service you are selling. The radio commercial also has to have a very narrow focus speaking directly to that persons needs and emotions. The radio commercial is also needs a strong call to action that they consumer won't want to pass up.

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