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How Can Radio Ads Drive More Sales For Clients? The Ad Copy Is A Good Place To Start.

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Marketers like to say radio is good at so-called top of the funnel metrics, like brand awareness and familiarity. But when it comes to driving actual purchases, radio has traditionally been a tougher sell. That is missing the mark, according to Marketron Senior VP Todd Kalman, who in a blog post for the Radio Advertising Bureau, says how the radio spot is crafted may help close the perception gap.

“We shouldn’t limit the capacity of radio ads to top-funnel tactics,” he writes. “They perform well, but there’s more that spots can do for advertisers. They create and convert demand with a reach that outperforms other types of media.”

Kalman says the effort starts with identifying the advertiser objectives that will dictate the copy, such as labeling the target audience, what their pain point is, and what would make the commercial attractive to the audience.

“Defining these things will help with any bottom-funnel campaign,” Kalman says. “Radio is the king of reach, but it’s okay to be more targeted in bottom-funnel content. Let the segment of the listeners that advertisers want to attract know it’s for them.”

His tips for creating a radio ad that performs well on lower-funnel actions like looking something up on a website or actually buying the product starts with ad copy that creates a sense of urgency for the product’s sales promotion. Kalman suggests mentioning an offer is available for a limited time and then repeating that point several times through the spot.

There is also a level of specificity needed, especially when it comes to driving traffic to an advertiser’s website. “The ad should provide a unique URL that’s short and easy to remember,” Kalman suggests. “The page should highlight the offer and have a conversion point. It’s a more effective strategy than sending them to the homepage.”

Not only should the URL be straightforward, but so should the language used in the commercial. Since radio is a medium where listeners are often doing other things, whether it is working, driving, or doing something around the house, Kalman says radio ads need to be straightforward and free of jargon. Being clear and concise prevents confusion. “Remaining on brand also matters, and the content should follow the company’s voice and tone,” he writes in the blog.

Other tips for driving sales and website visits include leading the ad with copy that talks about the benefits of a product, not its features. Kalman says that means writing ad copy that “shows” a product, not “telling” about a product. In an audio format, he says that is done by focusing on how the product or service solves their problem.

The voiceover talent is just as important as the music. While some research has shown that women deliver better ad results when used as a voiceover talent, another study released in March found that having both female and male voices is a better option since audio ads with multiple voices increase recall by 10%.

But Kalman says another way to approach ad copy is by considering who is the speaker. He says a radio spot that uses customers' or employees' testimonials will create engagement, while the reviews of other users heavily influence consumers. Having spots read by hosts can also help move the needle.

"When hosts read the copy and endorse the company, this can go a long way with listeners," he says. "Many trust the voices they hear every day and could respond more favorably to these ads."

