

Radio Advertising Is the Perfect “Lift” for Digital

Contributor: Dustin Wilson, Manager of Client Development, Digital, Marketron

It's no secret that integrated advertising campaigns typically perform better. When you pair radio and digital ads, they're an excellent complement to each other. That's because audiences consume content in multiple ways across lots of mediums. And that's a necessity in a world where people encounter hundreds if not thousands of ads in a single day.

The competition to break out from the noise and connect with audiences is key for any advertiser. However, they may have misconceptions about what channels work best. Well, they don't need to go on hunches, and neither do you. Data and research support that radio ads can lift the performance of digital ones.

When working with broadcast clients, evangelize the power of diversifying ad channels. Here's why you do it along with the data that supports it.

Advertisers Can Reinforce Recognition and Recall

Do you remember the last ad you saw or heard? Probably not unless you had an emotional response to it, or it's a brand you encountered multiple times. The reality is that most of us are “ad-blind.” We ignore, often subconsciously, the content we perceive as an ad. So, that's a problem for digital advertising engagement. To get out of the “blind spot,” advertisers should use a collection of tactics.

There's a concept called the “mere exposure effect,” which also supports this point. It's a phenomenon that states that the more someone hears or sees something they are neutral to, the more likely they are to develop positive feelings for it.

If your advertisers want to capture the attention of their audience, they'll be in the best place to do so by using radio spots and digital. If you can offer that to them, it's a win for you and them.

Some advertisers may be apprehensive about this strategy because it's new to them. If so, you can use these arguments to support your recommendations.

Radio Ads Really Do Lift the Performance of Digital Ads

There's no denying that radio wins on reach. AM/FM has a market share of 76% across all ad-supported audio. It also reaches 84% of Americans age 18+ weekly. For these reasons, your customers see it as a powerful channel. But what happens when you integrate it with digital?

Radio Ads Boost Search

Telling your advertisers that their radio dollars make their digital dollars more effective seems like a strong statement, but a factual one. RAB actually studied the concept and published a report. The findings show radio generated an average of 29% lift in Google search activity. The report also revealed that the quality of the creative directly impacted search. The day and time contribute as well. Searches occurred more on weekdays during midday hours.

RAB also reported that radio ads lifted legal services website traffic by 13% in 2020 and 10% for the first half of 2021. Midday was the top time for this, and Thursdays were the best performing day.

Sharing this information with advertisers shows them the link between radio ads and search engine marketing (SEM). It's also easy to track. If a spot plays on a Wednesday at noon, you can then refer to analytics to see if there were more clicks on SEM ads.

Radio Ads Support Google and Facebook Ad Tactics

SEM isn't the only channel that gets a boost from radio. Another study evaluated 100 radio advertisers from 2019 to 2020. The research sought to determine if ad spots lifted Google and Facebook advertising. The findings report it did. Radio created a lift of 15.2% in the first half of 2019, rising to 15.5% in the second half. For the first six months of 2020, the lift increased to 18.3%!

So, What's the Reason Behind Why Radio and Digital Are Better Together?

Peering into the numbers and a bit of psychology, the why is easier to explain.

- You're hitting everyone: Radio offers broad reach to anyone in the listening area. Digital is more targeted since you can define your audience.
- People consume different content formats at different times: Someone could be listening to the radio on their drive into work. Then on their lunch break, they're scrolling online or on social media. Brands that pop up in both could influence a person's decision when they need to make a purchase.
- Radio and digital engage different senses: Radio is auditory-only. Maybe because of this, people find them more engaging and less disruptive. Digital ads are visual but can also include sound if considering video. Our brains process these interactions differently, and that could enhance their retention of the message.

Radio and Digital: What Are the Best Practices?

Since we're in the broadcast and digital ad ecosystem, we spend a lot of time educating and enabling sales teams. Here are some best practices that we recommend.

- Your proposal should include all tactics together. If you have one for radio and one for digital, your customers may get confused as to how it all works together. You can do this best with a cross-channel advertising platform.
- Messaging should be consistent no matter the format. You're creating a campaign for your advertisers, not one-off spots.
- Defining the target audience for digital is imperative. You can target by geography, demographics, preferences and/or behaviors.
- CTAs (call-to-actions) should align with the format. For radio, the ad may direct the listener to the store. Digital ads can also be in-store offers, but they'll go to the business' website when they click.
- Data is always your friend. Because you track every aspect of linear and digital ads, you have data that can inform how you set up campaigns to ensure optimal performance.

Meet Advertiser Goals with the Power of the Perfect Pair

Digital and radio complement each other well. Educating your advertisers about how and then providing recommendations helps you meet their goals and positions yourself as an expert and partner. With the right tools, strategies and processes, developing radio + digital campaigns can be easier than you think. If you're not doing this, now's the time to capture a bigger part of your customers' ad spend.

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