



"The New Kid on the Block Grows Some Teeth"

Digital Graphics -- November 2003

Hearken back to days past, to a simpler time, when advertising options included radio, newspapers or magazines. Alas, those days are no more. Aside from radio and print, you now can choose from network or cable TV, direct mail, park benches, telemarketing email blasts – heck, you can even buy advertising on ski lifts. And you'd better not overlook truckside advertising, because if the pundits are right, this new kid on the block has earned some credibility and real teeth. Truckside advertising, it appears, has grown up to become a mature player in the modern advertising mix.

For a little affirmation, just visit the Outdoor Advertising Association of America website (www.oaaa.org) The OAAA, which is nearly 1,100 member companies strong, has this to say: "Over the past few years, the outdoor advertising industry has evolved into a rejuvenated media force... that's poised to compete aggressively in the 21st century media fray."

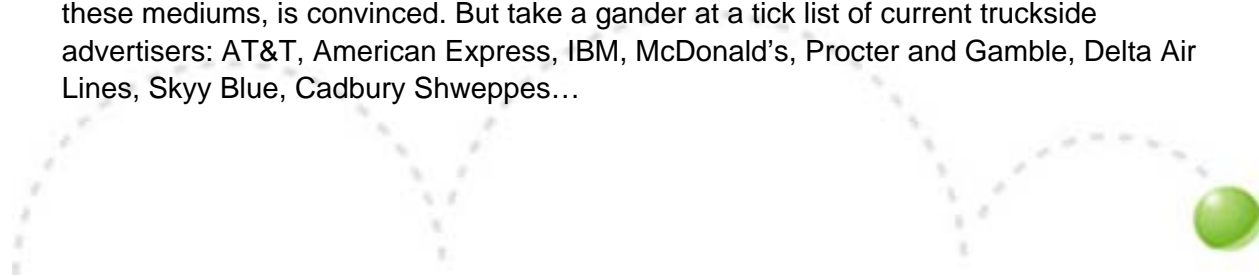
According to Sam Kaplan, VP of sales and marketing for Mobile Ad Group of New York City (and a member of the OAAA's Marketing Committee), "Today my phone rings with new business inquiries because we planted the seed and now it's growing. And the reason is that truckside works. The media buyers themselves know. This is something that has been five or six years in the making."

But what Kaplan makes clear is that he doesn't want to talk about the past. The story, he claims, is what is happening today.

"Now we're talking about Arbitron (radio ratings) and the guys at Nielson (TV ratings). These are the companies that provide the accepted price quotients for broadcast advertising. They have seen growth in truckside (advertising) while others mediums have stagnated, and they're doing something about it. As soon as the fourth quarter of next year, a ratings system will be in place that will rank test markets in the U.S. for mobile outdoor advertising."

FACT OR FANTASY.

Does truckside and mobile billboard advertising really work? Kaplan, who, after all, sells these mediums, is convinced. But take a gander at a tick list of current truckside advertisers: AT&T, American Express, IBM, McDonald's, Procter and Gamble, Delta Air Lines, Skyy Blue, Cadbury Shweppes...





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Now, a skeptic might argue that at an approximate CPM (cost per thousand impressions) of 80 cents, these heavyweights have so much money padding their coffers that the prevailing sentiment within the inner sanctum of each may be a derivation of don't sweat the small stuff. But Kaplan provides examples that reveal a more complex story,

"Delta Air Lines," says Kaplan, "wanted to impact the business traveler, who typically is difficult to reach with traditional advertising. This person is a very important part of Delta's business, and is really the backbone of the travel industry, especially in the post-9/11 environment.

"With mobile advertising we can reach travelers at terminals and also at fractional leased jet parks (where corporations spend lots of money to transport busy executives). So, versus going into Barron's or other business publications, Delta decided to reach this audience directly where they are traveling and doing business. Here is a pinpoint targeting method that is very cost effective when measured against broadcast mediums, because we are able to impact specific demographics exactly where they are."

