

You should be able to achieve your
lead and sales objective without the
use of radio and television advertising
if you have laid the right marketing
foundation.



Electronic Media— Broadcast Basics To Reach The Masses

We've come a long way and covered a lot of marketing components since Chapter 1. You now know how to analyze your market, calculate your lead and sales needs, configure your sales and marketing manpower, plan events, and implement a direct mail and print media campaign. This chapter heads you toward the home stretch. It's about the final promotional component—electronic media—which includes radio and television, as well as the youngest communication entry, the Internet.

Let's discuss radio and television first, since these two media share similar attributes.

One phrase sums up the power of radio and television: mass-market advertising (hence the name “broadcast”). To get up to speed on these media, just contact your local radio or television sales representatives to give you the low-down on your many options here. They'll be more than happy to acquaint you with the capabilities and “value” of broadcast advertising. You'll be provided with lots of facts and figures on audience profiles, listening or viewing times, and the CPM (cost per thousand) of taking your message into the homes

of your target market. They'll even offer to cut a substantially discounted contract rate and have the station produce your radio or television ad for free! It's a tempting deal, but as a prudent marketer you have to stop and consider if broadcast is really a practical and suitable addition to your media mix. In most cases, the answer is no, it's not.

Suitable Strategies or Senseless Overload?

Practically speaking, most communities simply do not need to employ broadcast advertising if they have implemented the critical components that *Inside Advice on Marketing Senior Housing* has presented. We've already discussed the relative merits of a marketing effort designed to reach your target market as opposed to blanketing the masses who may not have any interest in your community. Your fundamental marketing components (customer service, sales, networking, and events), complemented by a thoughtful advertising strategy (integrated direct mail and print media), should be clicking off more than a sufficient number of leads and sales. If not, double back to determine what components need finetuning before you layer on yet another level of advertising.

A standard operating procedure for any marketing program is to round out your well-planned direct mail and print advertising program with the costless side of electronic media. Rather than buying broadcast time, use these media as a way to extend your networking endeavors. Just as you did with print advertising, electronic media outlets should be loaded in your database, made part of your focus market hit list, and furnished with press releases on newsworthy items and community event calendars.

It takes a cool head and steely determination to limit your use of broadcast to good press relations. If you're working in a media-intense, competitive market, nothing will make your palms sweat like having your primary competitor roll out a jazzy radio or glitzy television commercial. If you're following the marketing mantra presented in Chapter 1, "Chase the customer, not the competition," you're not going to let the other guy's activities sway your solid marketing strategy. You're smart enough to know there may be other factors caus-

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ing your competition to advertise more than you do. Perhaps a heavy-handed administrator or board member insisted on running some radio commercials in a desperate attempt to buoy a sinking ship or massage an inflated ego. Maybe the marketing director bought into the same sales pitch that you got from the same media outlet. Or maybe the staff hasn't noticed that the incoming leads being generated by these media are not income-qualified.