



Making Old Media New Again

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Digital and social media - maybe with a fun filter or some augmented reality thrown in - are all the rage right now for marketers, but so-called traditional media - radio, cable and outdoor - still have all the reach, said a panel at Station Summit 2018 in Las Vegas on Thursday.

According to panel moderator Merry Aronson, founder of Merry Media Inc., radio remains more popular than television in terms of sheer volume.

"Each morning, more Americans still tune into AM and FM radio than watch TV or look at their smart phones or tablets," said Aronson.

In April, Nielsen reported that "93% of U.S. adults 18 and older listen to radio every week - more than those watching television or using a smartphone, TV, connected device, tablet or PC."

What that means for TV station marketers is that they should be taking advantage of radio's broad reach, its efficient cost-per-thousand and its ability to reach viewers when they are not in front of their televisions.

"Radio is the most cost-effective way to get the most viewers," said Dan Zimmerman, senior director of promotion and marketing, Sinclair Broadcast

Group. "Radio is cheap and effective. It's a big part of the way we advertise outside of our own air."

"Radio delivers people while they are outside their home," said Stacy Miller Eisenberg, VP of sales, Las Vegas, iHeartMedia. "There's definitely synergy there that works."

Marketers are using both over-the-air radio and digital streaming to hit large, untargeted audiences as well as more precise ones.

"We blend over the air spots with digital streaming," said Adrienne Anderson, VP, marketing and creative services, KTLA, Los Angeles. "It's much more about addressability with the digital signal so you can really drill down and find where those people are."

A third way to beef up the effectiveness of your radio promotions is to pair it with contests and giveaways.

"Cash is king," said Zimmerman. "You want the prize to be good enough that listeners want to win it but not so high that they don't feel that they have a chance. And would you rather have a \$50 gift card to a restaurant or a \$50 card to spend on anything they want?"

Also offering once-in-lifetime experiences - such as VIP backstage tickets to a concert or after-hours access to Disneyland-that money can't buy has proven to be very appealing to listeners, added Anderson.

Local cable is another way TV station marketers can reach viewers off of their own air, but using cable really requires them to do their research.

"Every market is different. You have to know your market; you have to know efficient that cable buy is," said Zimmerman. "There are a lot of questions on whether or not cable works - you have to know your market and your agency has to know your market to know how effective cable is."

"To Dan's point, the average cost of cable versus broadcast is 40 to 60 percent. Cable is a mathematical expression of your DMA, but it's not 100 percent of our universe," said Anderson. "There are some advantages to cable in terms of addressability and geo-targeting. If you want to spend dollars in those areas, you can do that. It depends on what your objective is and what you are trying to do."

Radio's reach plus the way people predominantly receive it in their cars can make it the perfect partner for outdoor advertising - billboards, bus stops, buses and the like - but it really depends on your market.

"Outdoor is really similar to cable - in some markets, outdoor is fantastic and in other markets, outdoor is not worth it," said Zimmerman.

Outdoor also requires knowing your market inside and out. For example, you don't want to buy a billboard that's hidden behind a tree or impossible to see across an eight-lane highway. The way to avoid this, said Zimmerman, is to "ride the boards," which means to literally go out and see how the billboards you are potentially going to buy are positioned.

"Outdoor is great for launch, for awareness. If you have a new show, it serves as a support medium for your on-air campaigns, a reminder medium," said Anderson.

Said Zimmerman: "You have to ask yourself how it works in your medium. You do need a radio buy to go with that board buy. If they are in the car, listening to the radio and they hear your spot, call in to your sweepstakes, and then drive by the board, it's all working together."