

What Happened? Troubleshooting Poor Response from Ad

Campaigns

By Diane Hughes

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Too many small business owners today run ad campaigns that get little to no results, and they have no idea why. When you have the knowledge to troubleshoot the poor responses, you also have the knowledge to make the needed changes so that - next time - your sales improve! Let's take a look at the breakdown of an ad campaign, and how to determine what went wrong.

Response vs. Results

It's important to understand the difference between response rate and results. When a customer takes the action you want him/her to take (i.e., clicking to your site, calling your 800 number, etc.), then you've achieved "response." This does NOT mean you've made a sale. The response rate of your ad campaign can be high without ever selling one product or service.

"Results," on the other hand, are the sales you make in conjunction with the response rate. When a customer takes the action you want him/her to take AND buys your product/service, then you've achieved results.

No Response

When you get little to no response, chances are that one of two things happened. One - your ad was poorly written and didn't generate enough interest to excite the customer to take action; or two - the ad didn't reach your preferred target customer.

How do you determine which one is the culprit? Test! Use the same ad, but place it in a different ezine or on a different Web site. If response rate improves, you know the

ad is most likely fine, but the audience exposure was off. If the response rate does not improve, it's probably best to rewrite the headline, the ad, or both.

Response But No Results

If you run an ezine ad, banner ad, etc., and get responses without making any sales, the most probable theory is that your supporting ad copy or offer is not doing its job. Ezine ads, banner ads, and the like will never make a sale on their own. The customer is almost always going to be directed to click back to your Web site. If the copy/design of your ad is working, but no sales are being made, take a good look at the copy or design of your site. Chances are that *it* could be costing you sales.

Again, testing is the key. Change a headline, add links that direct to "more information" pages, and so on. Run the ad again, and see if your results improve.

You'll notice that in either case, testing is the recommended course of action. So many small business owners get in a hurry and neglect to test their ads. While it may seem costly to run an ad, change an ad, and run it again - the truth is that running unproven ads all across the 'Net without gaining any return on investment (ROI) is a huge waste of money.

Yes, it does take a good deal of time. Yes, it can cost additional money. However, once you've taken the time to test an ad, and the copy on the supporting Web site that customers will be directed to, you'll be in a much better position to ensure consistent sales from your campaigns.

Diane Hughes is an accomplished internet entrepreneur and editor of the popular ProBizTips Newsletter. Subscribe to her newsletter for more tips, tricks, and secrets of the trade -- plus get HUNDREDS of eBooks, software and tools just for subscribing! <mailto:probiznews@aweber.com>

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