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Using NAA “Plan Book Methods,” Janesville (WI) Gazette Deploys New Special Event “Blitz,” Garnering Over \$100,000 in New Online and Print Revenue, in One Week!

The Challenge:

In times of an uncertain economy and rumors of a recession, The Janesville (WI) Gazette was looking for an opportunity to shore up new multimedia revenue opportunities from dormant newspaper advertisers, as well as, have a program that would be attractive to new advertiser categories. It was also essential that this advertising program be developed with variable “price points,” so it could appeal to a wide range of advertiser categories. With these goals in mind, the Gazette blended their print and online assets into the “Special Event Sales Plan,” and sought the assistance of The Blinder Group for its deployment.

Synopsis:

Instead of approaching advertisers with long-term contract agreements for advertising commitments for each month of the year, the Gazette opted to offer advertisers a “cost effective” opportunity to purchase one or more high-frequency weeks of advertising focusing on special events, sales or promotions they may have planned over the next 12 months. In short, the newspaper opted to take a lesson from the NAA (Newspaper Association of America) “Plan Book” initiative, which stresses that advertising reps should meet with advertisers to assess their long-term goals, and then craft advertising solutions to help them during their planned promotional periods.

With this program offering, advertisers were invited to purchase these pre-packaged, full weeks of print and online advertising at a palatable “combo” rate.

If the advertiser agreed to purchase one or more of these weeks during the sales call, in advance of their actual placement, the newspaper was prepared to offer them:

- 100 column inches of guaranteed print ad placement within the first section of the newspaper, for each week they requested, with no extra charge for color.
- 50,000 impressions guaranteed online ad placement “above the fold” on the story pages of the newspaper’s Web site for each week requested.
- A free “pick up” ad in the Gazette’s “TMC” product: the “Jotter.”

All within the pre-selected week(s) they desired.

The rate offered, for each week purchased of pre-committed advertising, was \$1000 for both the print and online elements combined. This translated to a rate for the combined program at more than a 50% discount off what would usually be charged. However, for the advertiser to take advantage of all this value, they had to commit to the program by “close of business” on the day that the presentation was made. No exceptions were made!

“The Gazette sales reps did a stellar job in conveying the sense of urgency when scheduling the appointment,” stated Jane Bruce from The Blinder Group, who performed sales training calls with the reps in Janesville. “The reps stressed the importance of having the final decision maker (or all the decision makers) at the meeting, and let everyone know that this opportunity was so fantastic that a same day decision was required.” While there were a few clients who resented having to make an immediate decision, most advertisers understood and were happy to comply. It was stressed that this was their only opportunity to take advantage of this program and they could not add additional weeks beyond what they committed for on that day. The reps came prepared for the sales calls with a list of sales, promotions or special events that the advertiser traditionally runs, along with a calendar so that the client could easily choose their weeks. As each event was discussed, the rep advised the advertiser on which package would be most effective. Several advertisers committed to multiple weeks, at varying levels.

“The program was an overwhelming success, said Dan White, Vice President of Advertising Sales for the Janesville (WI) Gazette. “In the five-day ‘blitz,’ the Gazette generated over \$100,000 in new incremental business. This package was integral in helping us close first-time advertisers, as well as generate additional weeks of advertising above annual commitments.”

Blinder Group Support:

Mike Blinder of The Blinder Group made an initial visit to the Janesville Gazette to conduct strategic planning with senior managers, as well as conduct an initial training session with the traditional salespeople of the newspaper to instruct on:

- Prospecting new multimedia business
- The basics of multimedia marketing and how the medium works
- Best practices in selling online solutions
- The benefits of bringing interactive products to market
- Methods for using the Web to garner more market share
- How to attack the competition with online offerings

The training also included content informing the sales staff of The Blinder Group’s return visit, in which “4-legged” sales training/closing calls were performed with the reps, to assist in the launching of this initiative. Salespeople were urged and encouraged during the meeting to set up a large amount of appointments, with qualified “decision-makers” of area businesses.

During that training, the sales staff was supplied with proven support documents that reinforced the training, as well as provided an appointment-setting script to assist them in setting up the calls.

Sales Support Materials

The Blinder Group also assisted in the production of the associated sales support collaterals necessary for this program's deployment. A simple, easy-to-follow multiple-page flyer was developed so the advertisers (and the sales team) could easily grasp the features and benefits of the sales program being deployed. Too often media companies do not graphically explain the online portions of sales programs in an easy-to-follow manner, thus creating confusion during the sales process. The Blinder Group has vast experience in creating such sales presentations.

GazetteXtra.com Maximum Impact through Multiple Media

Multiple-media together, ROCKS!

The Gazette has over 95,000 readers / week

44% of our online readers did not read

* Web Server Statistics for GazetteXtra.com December 2007

GazetteXtra.com Maximum Impact through Multiple Media

All print ads appear in section #1 of the Gazette

Plus one ad free each week in "Jotter"

Top/Right "Corner Ad"

GazetteXtra.com Maximum Impact through Multiple Media

All online Ads appear "above the fold" on the site

Mid Page "Leader Board Ad"

Top/Right "Corner Ad"

All online Ads appear

Top of Story "Leader Board Ad"

Top/Right "Corner Ad"

Left Rail "Story Ad"

Story Page "Above The Fold" Layout

(JanesvilleFigure#1.jpg - Sample pages of the multimedia presentation created by The Blinder Group)

WEATHER • 11A
20°-18°
 Partly sunny and breezy
20°-15°
 Partly sunny, breezy and warmer

The Janesville Gazette
 Wednesday, January 2, 2008 • Our 163rd Year • 75¢

Bliss
 power to connect

Store breaks all-time sales records

2008: Retail sales off to huge start

Big sale is big boost to bottom line

Standing room only at Sunday event

SPECIAL EVENTS

Special event brings new customers

Customers lined up outside store

Reach over
50,000*
 Gazette Readers
 each day, plus over
9,000**
 unique visitors per day
 at GazetteXtra.com

*Make sure your event is successful
 with the area's best event package!*

7-Day Special Events Package — \$2,000

- 127 inches of Gazette color advertising***
- 50,000 pageviews on Bliss websites**

*Source: MORI Market Study, 2006
 **Google Analytics, historical data used to project pageviews

***Gazette ads are based on space being available and will not be scheduled for Sundays or Thursdays. Because the above advertising program includes rates far below regular programs, ads will run within a range of dates including Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays, but are not absolutely guaranteed to run on a specific date.

*Special events are a great way
 to grow your business!*

The Janesville Gazette

**Call your Sales & Marketing Consultant
 to discuss your marketing ideas today!**

(608) 754-3311 • 1-800-236-0852

(JanesvilleFigure#2.jpg – “Sample “leave behind” created by the Gazette Marketing Department)

Download the entire sales presentation used on Blinder Group sales calls at:
<http://www.blindergroup.com/articles/Blinder-Janesville-SalesMaterials.pdf>

Guaranteed Revenue Generation:

One of the key elements in ensuring sales success of this initiative is garnering advertiser approval of meeting attendance, as well as the validity of the concept in general. Some of these advertisers are new to marketing their business online and feel wary of trying new ideas. One of the most effective means of accomplishing attendance and acceptance is to introduce the advertiser to an industry respected “outside” consultant who has had success with similar programs, with similar businesses, in similar markets, all across North America. That is why many media companies contract with The Blinder Group to perform “4-legged” sales training closing calls with traditional ad reps, to assist in the launch of programs like the one defined in this document. Also, during these assisted, “4-legged” sales training/closing calls provided by The Blinder Group, the accompanying salesperson learns new, valuable techniques in how to sell innovative programs, like this one, in an effective manner.

The Blinder Group has a proven track record of generating high “closing” ratios, resulting in significant revenue, for client media companies that have deployed this form of advertising sales initiative. During these assisted, “4-legged,” sales training/closing calls, with the sales reps in Janesville, The Blinder Group achieved an 85% “closing ratio” during the initial 1st visit, when the call was performed in front of a “qualified decision-maker,” resulting in over \$100,000 of new print and online revenue during the initial week of deployment. Once the initial training week was completed, the sales people continued to sell the program resulting in more revenue for the Janesville (WI) Gazette.

Advertiser	Qualified Decision Maker	Rep	Status	Weekly Income	Weeks	Income	Odds to "close"	Pending Revenue	Closed Revenue
Monday, Jan 14 2007									
Janesville Brick	Yes	Dan	Sold!	\$1,000	3	\$ 3,000.00			\$ 3,000.00
Choice Cleaners	Yes	Nina	Sold!	\$2,000	3	\$ 6,000.00			\$ 6,000.00
Beloit Mattress	Yes	Nina	Sold!	\$2,000	2	\$ 4,000.00			\$ 4,000.00
Building Blocks	Yes	Trish	No - too much money						
Rummelhoff	Yes	Julie B	Sold!	\$1,000	3	\$ 3,000.00			\$ 3,000.00
JAC	Yes	Mary	Sold!	\$2,000	1	\$ 2,000.00			\$ 2,000.00
r/s -									
Tuesday Jan 15									
Fairview Florists	Yes	Dan	Sold!	\$1,000	5	\$ 5,000.00			\$ 5,000.00
Kealy's Cafe	Yes	Julie D	No - wrong demo, concentrating on the retirement crowd -- will do print ads						
Power Sports / Auto Hubb	Yes	Julie B	Sold!		mix	5	\$ 11,000.00		\$ 11,000.00
Harm's	Yes	Julie B	No - huge issues with paper, but will consider a GazetteExtra.com only program						
Floors & More	Yes	Julie B	Sold!	\$2,000	7	\$ 14,000.00			\$ 14,000.00
Mid State	No	Jen	No, Gatekeeper couldn't sell through to owner						
r/s -									
Wednesday, Jan 16									
Jemy's Sewing & Vac	Yes	Julie B	Sold!	\$1,000	9	\$ 9,000.00			\$ 9,000.00
Wolter's Pools	Yes	Julie B	Sold!		mix	3	\$ 4,000.00		\$ 4,000.00
Sylvan Learning Center	Yes	Nina	Sold!	\$2,000	5	\$ 10,000.00			\$ 10,000.00
Park Place Apt	Yes	Julie D	Sold!	\$1,000	5	\$ 5,000.00			\$ 5,000.00
Carpet Mart	No	Mary	Sold!	\$4,000	3	\$ 12,000.00			\$ 12,000.00
Thursday, Jan 17									
Taco Johns	No	Julie D	No - presented to the store manager, who spoke to owner. Only willing to spend \$300 for their Grand Opening.						
Moann Floors	Yes	Trish	Sold!		mix	2	\$ 3,000.00		\$ 3,000.00
Wood Lodge	Yes	Trish	No, already on space availability program -- doesn't need any additional print.						
The Studio	Yes	Marci	Sold!	\$1,000	1	\$ 1,000.00			\$ 1,000.00
Walsh Appliance	No	Nina	Sold! (Felt pressured and wouldn't commit to any other weeks until he saw results	\$3,000	1	\$ 3,000.00			\$ 3,000.00

(JanesvilleFigure#3.jpg – “Screen Snap” of Blinder Group sales call report as issued daily to newspaper management during sales “blitz” week)

“I have to ‘take my hat off’ to Dan White at the Gazette,” exclaimed Mike Blinder, founder and President of The Blinder Group, Inc., a multimedia consulting and sales training firm, based in Tampa, Florida. “Dan had the vision to put together this program that mimics the logic of the NAA’s ‘Plan Book’ sales strategy. However, rather than just sit with the advertiser and plan their entire year’s traditional print advertising, this solution forces a ‘blend’ of online and print as part of the solution. It also helps the reps see the value in taking online products to their advertisers, on every sales call.”

Local Client Contacts:

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Download this case study at:

<http://www.blindergroup.com/articles/Blinder-Janesville-CaseStudy.pdf>