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Spotlight on... **Outdoor Media**

Outdoor, or out-of-home advertising, as it's also called, can be a spectacular medium. But as with all media, the choice to use it must be made with specific advertising objectives in mind and a clear understanding of its advantages and limitations.

Advantages

Impact. Provides the largest and most colorful display for an advertiser's product or service.

Economical. Offers both reach and frequency at relatively low cost. Outdoor has one of the least expensive cost-per-thousand (CPM) levels of the major advertising media.

Geographically flexible. Can be bought on a national, regional, or local basis, meaning advertisers of all sizes can use the medium.

Reminder medium. Good secondary medium. Outdoor can round out a campaign by providing extra reach and frequency.

Limitations

Creative. Not suited for all messages. Outdoor cannot tell a story. The challenge is to create designs that can relate a message in pictures and/or a very few well-chosen words.

Short exposure time. Consumers pass signs quickly. Copy must be limited...Experts warn against using more than seven to ten words.

Little audience selectivity. While some areas within a market may be pinpointed, outdoor is basically a mass medium with little ability to target.

Availability. In many communities, demand is greater than available sites.

Outdoor remains an important consideration in planning an overall media strategy.

Some of its best uses are:

- Building cost-effective frequency as part of a total advertising effort.
- Creating consumer awareness for a slogan or theme.
- Building distributor and retailer awareness of product advertising.
- Establishing new product or service recognition.
- Exposing a message near the product's point of sale or use.
- Identifying the location of a business or service.

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