

advertising

Looking Ahead to Sunny Skies

By Scott McIntosh
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What do you do when you're a small business in a recession?

Is the answer to cut back, hide and adopt a bunker mentality until the storm is over?

I don't think so. When the storm is over and you come out of your bunker, you may find out that no one remembers who you are.

Of course, this is a good opportunity to cut out any unnecessary expenses and focus your spending so that your business is as efficient as it can possibly be.

But now is not the time to hide. If anything, in an environment of shrinking spending dollars, it's even more important to get out there and fight for those dollars.

According to a McGraw-Hill Research study looking at 600 companies from 1980 to 1985, businesses that chose to maintain or raise their level of advertising expenditures during the 1981 and 1982 recession had significantly higher sales after the economy recovered. Companies that advertised aggressively during the recession had sales 256 percent higher than those that did not continue to advertise.

Yeah, yeah, we're just saying that because advertising is our business. But here's a shocker: We actually believe it. Of course, we wouldn't have gotten into the newspaper business if we didn't believe in it. Anyone who's talked to us about the newspaper business and the value of advertising in your local hometown newspaper knows how passionately we believe in it.

But we're not just talking the talk. We're walking the walk. We're putting our money where our mouth is.

In an effort to help our local businesses get their message out to local residents, we mailed free copies of the Kuna Melba News to every household in the Kuna school district – 8,500 households – during the month of February. And not only are we not raising our advertising rates, we actually dramatically reduced them during February. We really want to help our advertisers get their message out at an affordable price during these difficult economic times.

In addition, the Kuna Melba News is making its own extra push to earn new subscribers. We are now offering a 100 percent guarantee that once a new subscriber starts getting the Kuna Melba News, we will refund their money completely if they don't love getting the Kuna Melba News. We're that confident in the quality of the newspaper.

Further, starting next week, you'll see billboards on Meridian Road, next to Kuna City Hall and at Fairview and Cloverdale advertising the Kuna Melba News, encouraging local residents to start a new subscription.

And while you're driving around looking at our billboards, if you happen to have the radio tuned to Mix 106, you'll likely hear radio ads for the Kuna Melba News as part of our marketing campaign.

This month, we'll be launching a new product, the Kuna Melba News Roundup, a free newspaper that will go to every household in the Kuna and Melba ZIP codes – for a total market coverage of 7,800 households. The Roundup will carry abbreviated versions of the top stories from the Kuna Melba News from the month as well as the community calendar and some general lifestyle feature stories. We think this will again be another way to get our message out to the community and get our advertisers in front of every household in Kuna and Melba.

We don't know what 2009 will hold. We don't know if things will get worse or better. But we do know that now is the

time to be aggressive. When the storm is over, we're looking ahead to sunny skies.

The Kuna Melba News is a 2,200-circulation weekly.

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