

Vendor Supplied Marketing Can Work Against You

By Matthew A Perosi



You are running a jewelry store and dividing your time between multiple responsibilities is very demanding. You try to manage every task large and small, and some days it feels like you are doing it all. Your staff also looks to you for answers even though you may not have them.

Delegating some of your tasks to others is certainly a way to lower the overall number of hours in your workweek. Still, delegating tasks also means you risk double-checking the fine details of your business' work that only an owner would probably notice.

Forward-thinking vendors understand the time limitations of retail jewelers, and many of them provide complete marketing campaigns to complement the jewelry they sell. These campaigns include traditional marketing like catalogs, direct

mail, newspaper ads, and TV commercials. In principle, these turnkey marketing campaigns save retailers the time and money it takes to produce in-house ads.

Through the recent recession I've noticed more vendors helping retailers with these turn-key campaigns; and hoping to lower the printing costs, many vendors are offering digital versions of the ad campaigns. These digital versions include iPhone apps, website plug-ins, Facebook applications, email campaigns, and even QR codes. This is a natural evolution of the complete marketing package, and again, in principal this is good for both the vendor and the retailer.

Interestingly enough I've also found many mistakes in the digital ads, mistakes, which I feel, are pretty obvious. Furthermore I doubt an experienced retail jeweler would ever let these mistakes happen if they were using traditional campaigns.

Here's a list of very obvious mistakes I see all the time and which turn perfectly good digital ads into dismal failures:

1. **No store name** or store logo on the ad
2. **No phone number** on the ad
3. **No store address** on the ad
4. **No store website address** listed on the ad
5. **None of the graphics or text** linked to the store's website
6. **Inconsistent** store image/branding



On a regular basis I receive dozens of emails sent by vendors on behalf of specific retail jewelers. Many of these vendor-sent emails are missing phone numbers, store addresses, website addresses, and links to a website. These email ads are visually attractive, but the customer has no easy way to access basic information, like the store's store hours.

I'd like to think that the principles of advertising in traditional media are common sense. A TV commercial and a newspaper ad must include a phone number, store address, a website, and maybe even a slogan. Billboards might even include an arrow pointing the way to the store. Traditional media ads typically share a unified branding image as well.

I don't really think anyone is directly to blame for the mistakes I've described. Digital advertising is still a new medium, but several advertisers have forgotten that all the principles of advertising still apply. Many marketing efforts are caught up in using the technology for the sake of using it, instead of examining if the technology is being used correctly for advertising.

My recommendation is to take those vendor-supplied ads and give them to the person who normally manages those functions for you. Give the Facebook applications to your Facebook agent, give the prepackaged email to the person who usually manages your email marketing, and give that website plug-ins to your website programmer. The specialist for each digital medium is more qualified to tell you how best to fit it into your existing branding.

This method is similar to the marketing agencies that produce print catalogs featuring jewelry from multiple vendors. Those agencies frequently take existing vendor artwork and rework it for the unique needs of the jeweler.

Even though vendor-supplied advertising seems like a time and money saver, there are too many technology variables that can work against you. Don't leave your advertising up to the various whims of individual vendors. You can still save some time and money if the vendor is willing to work with your digital marketing specialist who can change the ads for your unique needs.

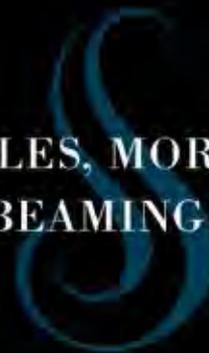


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Matthew Perosi is the Founder of the Jeweler Website Advisory Group (jWAG), a research team devoted to reporting how jewelers can use websites, mobile technology, and marketing trends to further personal and

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