

Questions for Advertisers

One-on-One, In-Person Interviews

The Sanford Herald

Conducted Spring 2015, by UNC Students

Thank you for setting aside time to help the Sanford Herald plan for the future. As I mentioned, you are one of the most important clients for the newspaper and Bill, and we want to make sure the Herald understands your future needs and takes those into account.

Before we begin, I would just like to get a little bit of the rationale behind advertising on the Sanford Herald. What do you think are the benefits of advertising with the Herald? Why do you advertise with them?

Let's start by talking about your current advertising needs and how you decide where to spend your advertising dollars.

Current Advertising/Business Needs

1. How do you decide how much to spend on advertising each year? Is it a percent of revenue – or some other measure? Does it increase or decrease on a yearly basis? (Try to get total dollar amount spent on advertising if possible – but don't push. Some advertisers don't want to divulge that – others will.)
2. How long have you been an advertiser in the Sanford Herald? How much of your advertising budget is currently allocated to the Sanford Herald? Is that more or less than previous years? Are there specific days on which you intentionally advertise?
3. In what other publications, radio or television stations, or web sites – do you advertise? (Try to get a percent breakdown by category of media, if they won't give dollar amount for each venue.) How do you assess the ROI (return on investment) in each medium? (The newspaper, free glossy booklets, broadcast stations, web, etc.)
5. Has the amount you've invested in digital advertising increased over the last three years? If so, by how much? Why? Where do you plan to allocate your advertising budget over the next three years? Is it different from today? Why?
6. How do you plan to grow your business over the next three years? Who are your main competitors? How do they allocate their advertising dollars across available media?

How the Sanford Herald can better meet their advertising needs

1. Are you a subscriber to the print edition of the Sanford Herald? What do you consider its strengths and weaknesses – both in terms of the audience it delivers and its ability to help your business grow?

2. How often do you visit the website? What do you consider its strengths and weakness? Have you ever advertised or considered advertising on the web site? If so, what were the results? If not, why not?

3. Do you have a website or digital presence (website, Facebook, Twitter, etc.)? How do your customers interact with your digital platforms?

4. How has your usage of smart phones or tablets changed over the last three years? What do you use your phone for? (i.e. texting, search, etc.) How do you think your own usage compares with that of your customers?

5. What sort of advertising products could the Sanford Herald offer on its website that would interest you? Display/banner ads, premium advertising locations (homepage roadblocks), video advertising, sponsorships, local search, targeted couponing . . . anything else?

New Opportunities:

There are a number of new advertising opportunities the Sanford Herald is exploring and could offer, depending on demand from advertising customers.

1. In thinking about social groups or networks in your area, are there any key customer segments you would especially like to reach? (For example, sports fans, religious communities, second-home owners, etc.)

2. What are the biggest challenges you face when planning, selecting, and carrying out marketing and advertising for your business? What about specifically for digital marketing (ie. Facebook, search engine marketing, web content creation, etc.)?

3. If there were a local resource that could help you plan, select and execute advertising and marketing activities, what types of services would they need to offer to help businesses like yours thrive?

4. If The Sanford Herald were to offer these marketing services, would you be interested in working together to create and maintain digital services for your business?

Conclusion:

1. Is there anything we have not discussed that you would like to discuss -- specifically how the News Reporter could better meet your needs?

2. If I have follow-up questions, I hope I can call you again?

Thank you again for your time.

**The Whiteville News Reporter
Conducted Fall 2009, Spring 2010, by UNC Students**

Thank you for setting aside time to help the News Reporter plan for the future. As I mentioned, you are one of the most important clients of the newspaper and both Les and Mickey want to make sure they understand your future needs and take those into account.

Let's start by talking about your current advertising needs and how you decide where to spend your advertising dollars.

Current Advertising/Business Needs

1. How do you decide how much to spend on advertising each year? Is it a percent of revenue – or some other measure? Does it increase or decrease on a yearly basis? *(Try to get total dollar amount spent on advertising if possible – but don't push. Some advertisers don't want to divulge that – others will.)*
2. How long have you been an advertiser in the News Reporter? How much of your advertising budget is currently allocated to the News Reporter? Is that more or less than previous years? Are there specific days on which you intentionally advertise?
3. In what other publications, radio or television stations, or web sites – do you advertise? *(Try to get a percent breakdown by category of media, if they won't give dollar amount for each venue.)* How do you assess the ROI (return on investment) in each medium? (the newspaper, free glossy booklets, broadcast stations, web, etc.)
4. Has the amount that you've invested in other media changed over the last five years? How? *(Try to ascertain whether they have actually used digital advertising to any degree and what they think of it.)*
5. How do you plan to grow your business over the next three years? Who are your main competitors? How do they allocate their advertising dollars across available media?
6. Where do you plan to allocate your advertising budget over the next three years? Is it different from today? Why?

How the News can better meet their advertising needs

1. Are you a subscriber to the print edition of the News Reporter? What do you consider its strengths and weaknesses – both in terms of the audience it delivers and its ability to help your business grow?
2. How often do you visit the website? What do you consider its strengths and weakness? Have you ever considered advertising on the web site? If so, what were the results? If not, why not?

3. How has your own personal usage of the web changed over the last three years? How often do you use the web to buy something? To search for national distributors? For local businesses that might carry a specific product?

4. How has your usage of cell phones (or PDAs) changed over the last three years? Do you use your phone for more than calling? (i.e. texting, search, GPS)

5. How do you think your own usage of the cell phone (or PDA) and home computer compares with those of your customers?

6. What sort of advertising products could the News Reporter offer on its website that would interest you? Display/banner ads/ Premium advertising locations (Homepage roadblocks), video advertising, sponsorships, local search, targeted couponing . . . anything else?

New Opportunities:

There are a number of new digital advertising opportunities the News Reporter is exploring and could offer, depending on demand from advertising customers.

7. For example, it could offer sponsorships of a social network or mobile alerts. Or it could offer mobile couponing? Would any of this interest you?

8. In thinking about social groups or networks in your area, are there any key customer segments you would especially like to reach? (For example, sports fans, religious communities, sailing enthusiasts, second-home owners.)

9. Would you want your web advertising to “complement” your print advertising? Or could you see it running “stand-alone”? How interested would you be in a package – that included print and digital advertising, plus an event.

10. How interested would you be in becoming a charter sponsor of a premium section of the site?

Conclusion:

1. Is there anything we have not discussed that you would like to discuss -- specifically how the News Reporter could better meet your needs?

2. If I have follow-up questions, I hope I can call you again?

Thank you again for your time.