
Boost ROI with print advertising

Many advertisers have turned their focus to digital campaigns in recent years, and with exciting new advancements in social media, content marketing, and microtargeting, the enthusiasm for digital media is understandable. However, a recent study by Benchmarking has revealed that advertising with print news media yields an average of three times greater overall campaign return-on-investment.¹ The precise return can depend on a number of factors including industry vertical, market competition, seasonality, PR, etc. Increased spend with printed news media has also been found to increase the effectiveness of online display campaigns, radio, and television advertising.

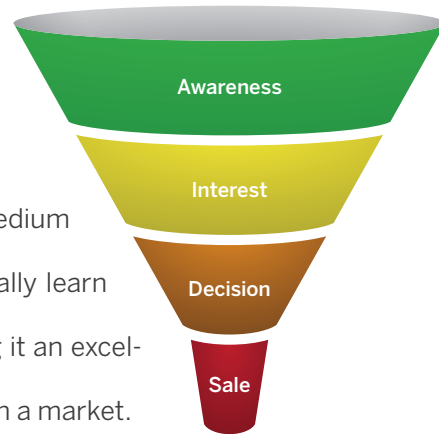
1 Print is personal

Unlike digital media, the majority of consumers make a conscious decision to engage with print media, increasing the prominence and perceived authority of ads placed in print. Having made an actual investment in this material also creates more

value in the advertising in the eyes of readers. Printed publications are also less ethereal than digital, or even broadcast and out-of-home placements, as beyond the initial engagement, these physical items stay in homes and offices for a greater length of time.

When readers interact with printed media, they are more likely to be wholly engaged in the act of reading, as opposed to other media, where they may be engaging with a “second screen,” driving, or otherwise distracted. Readers are less likely to find print advertising irritating, and may even find it adds value to the printed product, by thoughtfully complementing specific content.

Print is very much still a “top-of-funnel” medium—the medium through which consumers initially learn about brands and interact with them—making it an excellent venue for establishing brand identity within a market.



2 Print or no print

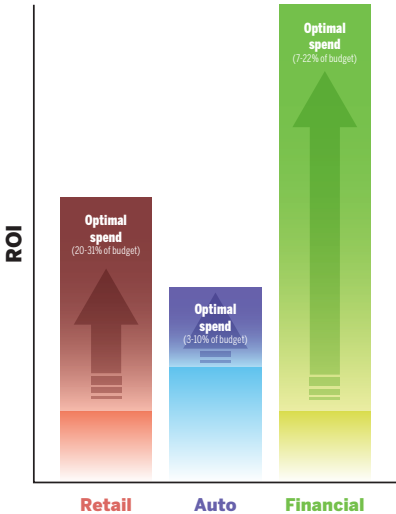
While the impact of digital advertising is directly measurable and instantaneous, print products have longer lag times, but also a longer shelf life that adds to their cumulative value, beyond the deliverable cost-per-mille. This is clearly demonstrated by the fact that campaigns that include newspaper display advertising have returns on average three times greater than campaigns with no spend in print news media. When spending at optimum levels, tuned specifically for factors such as industry and overall campaign budget, returns can peak at upwards of six times greater.

Retailers can double their campaign returns with a minimal investment in print. A more substantial investment has been shown to increase returns by nearly three

times over the baseline.

Automotive advertisers that neglect print display advertising are losing out on a 70% increase in returns they could experience on their campaigns.

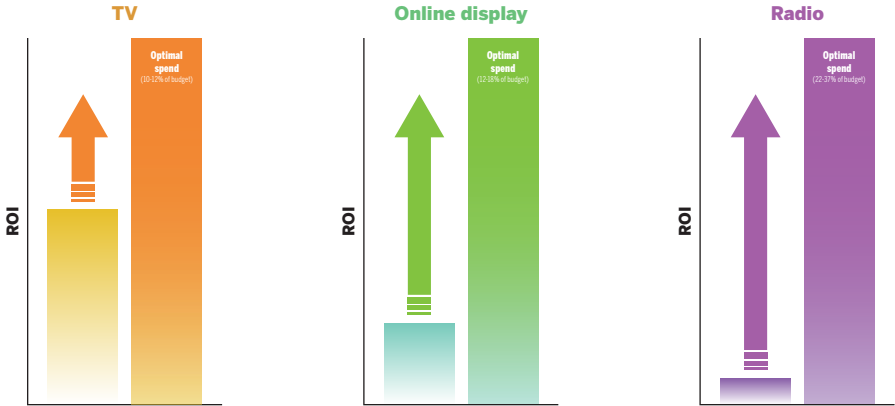
The financial sector sees the greatest multiplier, with nearly six times the return when spending at optimal levels.



3 Print supercharges your campaigns

It's important for any marketing campaign not only to have a mix of media, but to have the right mix in which all the pieces complement each other.

The significance of maintaining an appropriate level of spend in print news media is highlighted by its impact upon other media, and reinforces the concept of maintaining a suitable level of print spend as the backbone of a robust multimedia campaign. With a solid foundation of print reinforcing digital campaigns, effectiveness is boosted by up to 4.5 times. Returns from campaigns on television see a return of up to two times greater when print spend is at optimal levels, and radio up to ten times.

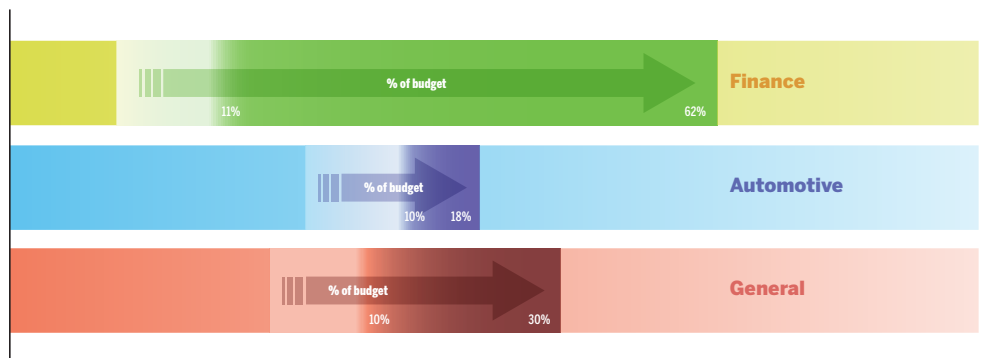


4 Optimal print spend

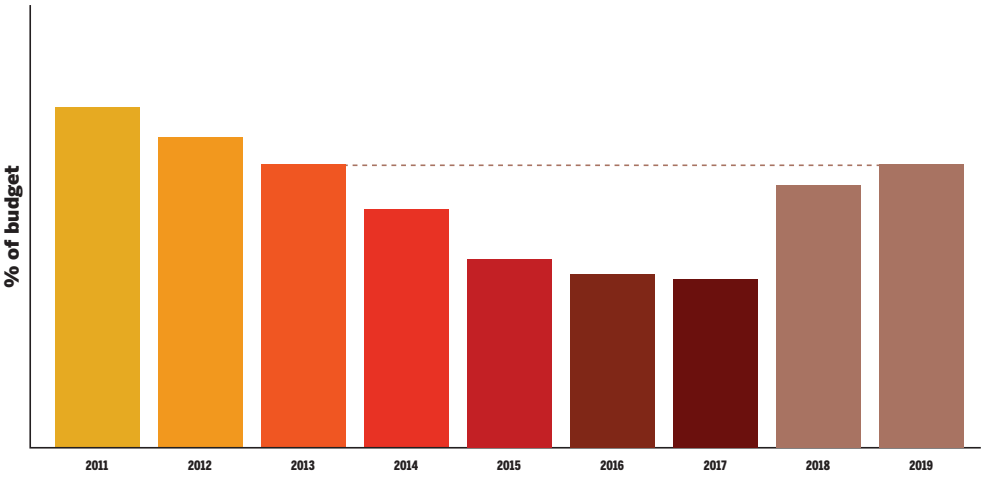
Optimal results are achieved when organizations tailor their spend to the demands of their industry and market. For example, Benchmark's study found financial industry advertisers with total annual campaign budgets of less than \$7M see best results when upwards of 62% of their spend is in print display. As the size of the organization scales up to the largest of banks and lenders, the need for such a large proportion declines, but should never be less than 11% of the total annual campaign budget.

By contrast, for automotive advertisers the recommended proportion is more consistent across the board. Smaller total campaign budgets (below approximately \$3M) see best results from a spend of about 18%, and even larger advertisers are best served when dedicating at least 10% of their budget to print.

The optimal spend varies from industry to industry, but overall it appears that the average brand is best served by a mid-range spend of anywhere from 10-30%. The specific mix is something with which organizations should experiment, to determine the best fit. Smaller brands tend to see their other media boosted by a greater print spend, while larger brands can dedicate a smaller percentage of their overall budget.



A good starting place is to return to at least 2013 levels, or to try a 5, 10 or 15% increase, combined with digital news display, broadcast, and other media.



A few more thoughts

Every organization serves a slightly different consumer base, which responds to different factors. Test different media mixes — even on a campaign-to-campaign basis — to see what works best for you.

Boost your returns: print boosts the ROI of other channels, so always make sure to have print in the mix in your multi-channel campaigns.

Experiment with different proportions: some industries see a good result with one-tenth of their total annual campaign budget being dedicated to print, while oth-

ers do not see optimal returns until nearly two-thirds of their budgets are allocated to print. Discover what works best for you.

Track your campaigns: while print is not instantly measurable in the same way that digital is, the effectiveness of campaigns can be traced in the near-term with coupon codes, special offers, etc.

Try a branding message: one of the things print does best is establish a brand's authority within a marketplace. Try a campaign that establishes your brand within the marketplace, in other words, a campaign which is not time-dependent.

Interact with consumers: use the medium to your advantage and encourage consumers to interact with you. Create experiences, experiment with bridging the gap between print and digital spaces, link a print ad to a custom app, or engage with your audience offline with an experience, a contest, or some other physical means.

Complement the content: try to place your ads in such a way that they add value for readers, either by requesting to be placed in a particular section of the paper, or taking advantage of opportunities to appear in special publications.

i The ROI Study, by Benchmarking <https://effectiveness.newsworks.org.uk/advertising-roi-study/>

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