



Pitching to gift guides, DTV effect on PSAs, more

Beth Krietsch February 10 2009

Digital conversion

What effects will the conversion from analog to digital have on my PSA in rotation?

Rest assured the conversion is simply a transmission signal change and has nothing to do with programming, advertising, or PSA usage. However, if your PSA is being tracked using The Nielsen Company's Sigma, learning about airings could be a problem – depending on the Sigma encoder “box” used.

“If your PSA was encoded using the newer encoder box, called SpoTTrac, all airings will be captured, because SpoTTrac puts a signal in the video portion and adds an audio watermarking feature,” says Annette Minkalis, SVP, West Glen Communications.

But PSAs encoded with the older Sigma boxes – which puts a signal only on the video portion – might miss detections in the shift from analog to digital.

“Nielsen expects to still receive usage data from some stations, but won't know until the conversion takes place which stations will be affected,” Minkalis adds.

Gift guides

What are some tips for pitching a client's product for a gift guide?

There are a few things to keep in mind when trying to get a product featured in a gift guide.

“It's about being first, so be sure to promptly respond to queries,” says Pearson Brown, director at Allison & Partners. “Also remember to include product samples, and don't ask for them back.”

Include your card and spec sheets when sending samples, Brown adds. It's also a good idea to include a 25- to 50-word description of the product, along with photos that can be used by the gift guide.

Don't forget the importance of being persistent when trying to get coverage for your client's product. Guilt works, so just keep calling and e-mailing, he says. Be careful, though, to find the line between pester and persistence.

“You should also offer ideas and products for future gift guides,” Brown says.

Lastly, thank the writer when the guide runs, and keep in touch for future placement opportunities.



Writing impact

What must I do to maximize the impact of writing?

“The best writing is distinguished by its impact – its ability to inform, persuade, explain, and sell,” says Ray Serafin, VP of editorial services for Stratacomm.

Dry or complex writing can be a barrier to achieving impact, so get to the point in one or two sentences, be clear and concise, and use proper grammar.

An understanding of your audience – their situation and what they want to know, combined with direct sentences, explicit phrases, and a respect for their time and intellect – contribute to the impact of your writing.

“Whether pitching a new product or delivering a speech, never underestimate the power of the written word,” Serafin says.