



MediaPost's
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Exclusive MDN Survey: Planners, TV Viewers Warm To Product Placements

By John Gaffney, *Editor*

According to two new surveys, one of 750 media planners and buyers and one of 500 American consumers, product ad placements are on the rise and TV viewers are noticing them. More than one third of individual media planners (36%) see their clients increasing the importance they place on product placements, resulting in three out of four media planners predicting 'significant growth' for the practice of placing products on traditional television shows within the coming year. The survey was conducted by InsightExpress, a professional online research firm, and MediaPost.

Data showed that media buyers are getting creative in reaching commercial-zapping viewers, as a quarter of those surveyed said they anticipate product placement to be a part of their media mix. That number has increased 7% over the previous 6 months.


One reason product placements are on the rise is that they are seen as a good ad-buy, as four out of five planners believe viewers notice them.

More than half of all television viewers (48%) said that product placement advertising is becoming more and more prevalent in the shows they watch. One in 4 TV viewers said that they have actually tried a product they saw advertised as a product placement on TV. And the practice is working. TV viewers are receptive to product ad placements during their regular programming. In fact, only 1 in 5 TV viewers said that product placements are inappropriate, no matter what type of program they appear on.

"Obviously, product ad placements are catching on because they are a more creative, less obtrusive way of getting a product in front of viewers," said Evan Fleischer, co-founder of The Michael Alan Group, a non-traditional marketing agency. "As an added bonus, product placement seems to rub viewers in the right way, communicating a brand message to the viewers without coming across like a hard sell."

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It's the goal of all guerrilla marketing: reach the consumer as they go about their daily lives while avoiding the look and feel of blatant advertising. And, I would expect that product placement will only increase in popularity as products like TiVo continue to threaten the reach and impact of traditional television commercials."

According to TV viewers product placements are most appropriate on the following types of television shows: sporting events (46%) reality shows (35%) sitcoms (35%) soap operas (27%) and dramas (23%).

The media planners/buyer segment of the project also showed that the community believes consumers are still flexible in their perception of product placements. Only 3% said TV viewers have "had enough" of the practice and 31 % felt the TV viewers were "starting to tire, but there was still room for growth."