

Know Where Prospects are Before You Shoot Ads at Them

"I know half of my advertising is wasted," a cynical industrialist once confided. The problem is I don't know which half."

Plenty of Angus advertisers feel the same. They are uncomfortable when they advertise. To them it is a little like shooting at a target placed behind a blanket. They know they will have to use lots of ammunition to make sure they hit the target. The temptation is to put aside the rifle and blast away with a shotgun in hopes of landing a pellet in the bull's eye.

Like a marksman, an advertiser needs to know who his target audience is, and where they are, before picking up his advertising gun. Marketers who lack this kind of information may well be wasting more than half their effort and money. A good marketing plan allows a breeder to identify an audience and target it effectively with little waste.

To develop a plan for your herd the first step is to locate where your present

customers are. On a map (a county outline map if you can find one) place a dot in the county, near the town, of each person you have sold cattle to in the past three years. This will show you where your present market is and likely will point out obvious areas where you need to place more emphasis.

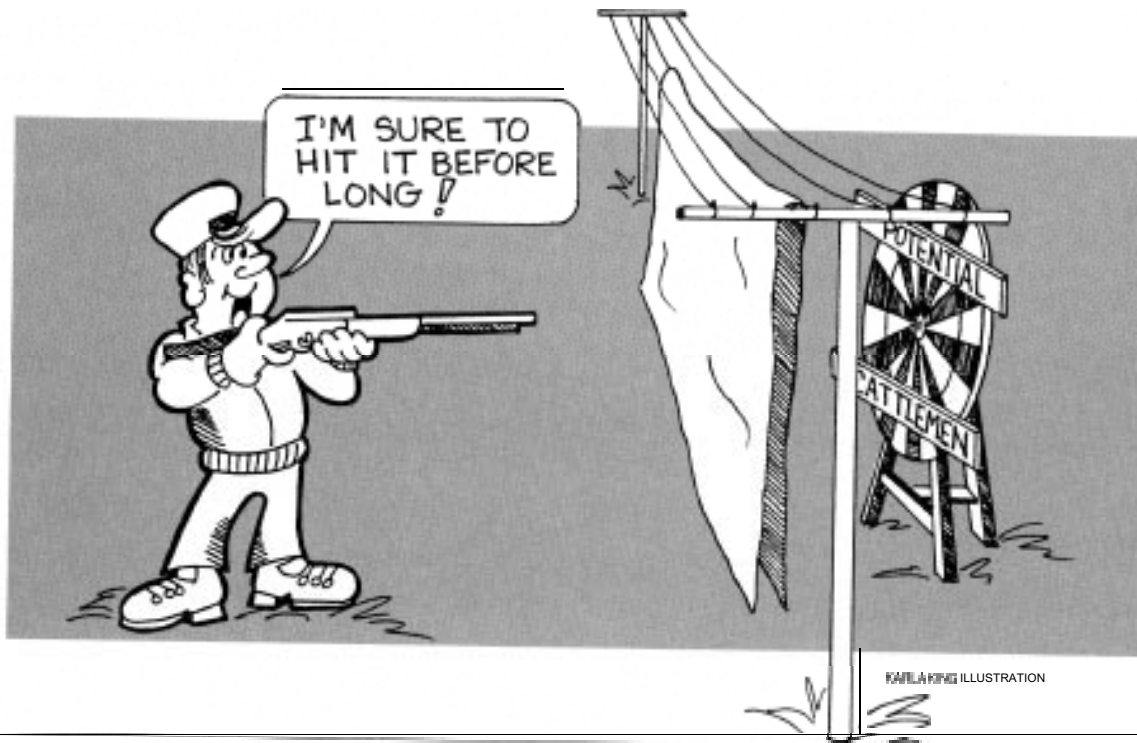
Second, find out how many commercial cattle producers there are in your present market area. Your state agricultural college will probably be able to provide you with county by county breakdowns of cattle numbers and individual producers. This will give you a good idea of whether your present market area has enough potential customers to support your seedstock business. If it is too small, then you will need to enlarge the target to include more counties, the whole state, or parts of several states.

In the end you will settle upon a defined market area. You will need to take into account the amount and kind of

competition you have. We will cover this in detail in the next Merchandising column. But it is obvious that the more competition, the larger the market area you need.

When you know the number of commercial cows in your market area, it is relatively simple to figure how many bulls are in use and how many should be replaced each year. By estimating the number of bulls of all breeds produced in your area you get a feel for your competition.

With the knowledge of who and where your potential customers are, you will never again have that sinking feeling when you place advertising or do market promotion. This kind of planning pulls the blanket from in front of your target and allows you to take accurate aim. There is no more guessing. You can advertise and promote with accuracy and efficiency.



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