

Print Marketing

Marketing workshop offered at NWSS gives insight to print marketing.

by **Kasey Brown**, associate editor

We can love cattle, we can promote them and we can show them; but, if we can't sell them, we cannot survive," says Rachel Cutrer, citing Carlos Guerra. President and creative director of Texas-based Ranch House Designs, Cutrer shares her perspective on print marketing at workshops her company hosts on a regular basis. We caught her tips during a marketing workshop offered at the 2014 National Western Stock Show (NWSS).

In a print media marketing campaign, she says, it is important to recognize the difference between marketing and promotion. Marketing is strategic and, most importantly, measured. Marketing isn't complete until the check has cleared your bank.

Promotion is one of four components of marketing, and it is the part in which you engage your customers through fun and creative means, she says. However, promotion requires constant, ongoing effort to try new things.

The other equal components of marketing, she says, include product, price and place.

"Quality animals are the foundation of any good program," Cutrer emphasizes.

Where to start

Cutrer illustrated the top five free (or nearly free) livestock promotion tools that can be the foundation of any subsequent marketing efforts.

The ranch's name can be its own promotional effort.

"The name is the unique way to identify your business to separate you in the marketplace," she says. Traditional ranch names usually include the family's name and type of cattle they raise, but nontraditional names are

gaining popularity because they have a story behind them or just set themselves apart. For instance, her own family's operation, V8 Ranch, was named because the original owner was an automobile dealer in 1944 and liked V8 engines. Tennessee River Music is another example. While not the most conventional name for a ranch, it is owned by Randy Owen of the music group Alabama and his family. The ranch was named after the group's first No. 1 single.



ILLUSTRATION BY CRAIG SIMMONS

A ranch's colors add to its distinction. Pick colors for your ranch and stick with them. These colors can be incorporated into your logo, business cards, website, ads and even clothing.

Color psychology can help you pick your colors. She notes that red means excitement; blue means corporate, calm or stable; green means money or environment; black means luxury; and purple means royal or champion. To differentiate yourself from a specific competitor, she suggests picking a ranch color on the opposite side of the color wheel.

A slogan, ranging from one to seven words, is another tool to promote your livestock and differentiate yourself, she says. For example, the American Angus Association's is *The Business Breed*.

Facebook pages are free; give access to an unlimited number of people; and can reach a large, targeted audience. A Facebook page allows you to post photos instantly and only requires an Internet browser or smartphone.

A business card is a low-cost option to promote your operation with high impact. It allows you to include your basic information, but she recommends adding some custom features, too. Some suggestions include a map to the ranch or directions, a photograph or blank backside for notes. You can order some from a professional, but there are many online vendors who can also print them, like www.vistaprint.com. Angus Productions Inc. (API) offers the service through its Special Services Department.

"After these five basic tools, there are basically thousands of options available to promote your product," Cutrer asserts.

Design and types of ads

Print media provide a very effective and long-lasting method of advertising. She admits that print media are expensive, but can bring large returns for the investment.

"In general, a cattle operation should factor anywhere from 1% to 5% of their gross sales to be spent on advertising. You never want to spend advertising dollars without a plan and an evaluation," she recommends. It does pay to sit down and do the math, and to think about how to measure the success of a print ad. Did you increase sales? Did more people remember your product or learn about your brand? Did you build loyalty or change a perception?

If you decide to use print advertising, she suggests having a ranch website with which to cross-reference, and that would have all of the ranch information available. Having a website to reference in the ad can give the readers a call to action.



PHOTO BY KASEY BROWN

► According to Rachel Cutrer, president and creative director of Texas-based Ranch House Designs, promotion is one of four components of marketing, and it is the part in which you engage your customers through fun and creative means. Promotion requires constant, ongoing effort to try new things.

"If you are going to spend money on a print ad, it needs to be an outstanding design," she emphasizes.

Every ad should have a headline, photos, supporting information in text, a call to action and contact information. The call to action is very important. It must be clear what you want your customer to get out of the ad.

Cutrer says she asks her designers at Ranch House Designs if they give a C.R.A.P., which stands for contrast, repetition, alignment and proximity. Strong contrast emphasizes importance of content through difference. Precise alignment eliminates confusion of where to look. She also says a good rule of thumb for typography is to never use more than three fonts in one design — a headline font, a copy font and an accent font, if needed.

All ads essentially fit into two design formats. The Ogilvy design puts the headline, a graphic or photograph, text and contact information in a vertical line in the layout. The Z formula organizes the headline at the top left, then copy and information flows across the page in a Z pattern, ending with your contact information at the bottom right of the page.

There are six types of ads generally used in livestock marketing, she explains.

- **Sire ads** display a large photo of the bull with an eye-catching graphic that coincides with the bull's name.
- **Winner ads** feature winners raised by your ranch. These are more common in breed publications and youth publications.

► **Reputation ads** are good for new ranches to introduce their program.

► **Sale ads** must include the sale name, date and location. A short description and photos of featured animals help these ads succeed.

► **An extreme ad** focuses on a unique design element and might not even include photos of the animals. The singularity of the ad draws attention, but she warns that it should only be used once. She adds that cool designs alone don't sell cattle.

► The last type is **minimal ads**, based on the principle of "less is more." These are good for ranches with established markets and a good brand identity, but use a lot of white space.

For better ad response, she recommends asking for an ad on the right-hand page, so people casually flipping through the publication are more apt to see it. She discourages use of a sideways ad. Consider a two-page spread ad to really make an impact if your budget allows.

Her final recommendation: "Have one page of advertising per 100 pages in the publication to keep your ads in front of readers."



Editor's Note: Angus breeders have a team in place to assist in their marketing endeavors — whether printing business cards, sending out a newsletter, advertising a sale, developing a website or designing a comprehensive marketing strategy to include it all. Contact your regional manager (see page 324) or call Angus Productions Inc. at 816-383-5200 to get started.