



How do you effectively communicate with regional audiences?

We all know that the purpose of communication is to share information, ideas and thoughts. However effective communication goes much deeper than this. It is not just about sending out your information to regional audiences and hoping you get results. Effective communication is also about building understanding and engagement with your regional audiences, and ultimately change consumer behaviour in a positive way.

When communicating with regional audiences there are three important considerations for any marketing and communication execution:

1. What is the content – what language will be used, what is the style and tone of the copy, what imagery is used, how will it be branded, what is the desired call to action?
Unfortunately in many cases this is where most communication stops. All of this is only about the sharing of information. It is important but it is also just the start.
2. What process will be followed – here we are considering how we will deliver the content. What is the best way to target our regional audiences, what platforms or channels should we use? For regional audiences the most effective channels and platforms are very different to metropolitan audiences. Get the process wrong and your content is wasted.
3. What is the current environment like – sometimes it is all about timing and context. It is important to be aware of what is happening in regional Australia, and ensure your content and channels are appropriate for the current environment your audiences find themselves in. What is impacting regional audiences, and how will they react to your content at that time? Again too often the content and process can appear to be right but all of this good work is undone by timing and environment.

Regional audiences in particular want to be engaged and want to have a conversation. If you can achieve this in your next communications and marketing activity you will be ahead of your competitors.

Regional consumers loathe to see themselves misrepresented through poor marketing and communication executions. An image of a farmer in new check shirt and new Akubra standing in front of a new tractor is not how regional Australia should be portrayed. Yet we see this all too often. Effective communication must get the content right, it must use the correct channels and platforms, and it must take into account the consumer's regional environment. If this is done you will build real engagement, conversation and ultimately change behaviour.

Have you seen some regional communication and marketing mishaps? We would love to hear about it.