

DROUGHTMASTER MARKETING

(Adapted and reprinted with the kind permission of Keith Evans)

Volume 2

2. When Buying Decisions are Made.

How many people, do you suppose, need a bull the day they read or hear your advertisement? Not many. Buying decisions, for business related items, like herd bulls, trucks, farm equipment and the like, are seldom impulse purchases. Unlike retail purchases, these decisions are arrived at months or even years ahead of the purchase. Advertisers who don't understand this can make costly advertising mistakes.

Bull customers start planning purchases when the first calves are born, or at weaning. Think of your own situation. Many of you also start planing your breeding program for the following year almost from the time your cows are bred. The chance of an advertiser changing your mind at the last minute is remote.

Still, many livestock advertisers believe their advertising should work like retail advertising. If they run an ad today, they expect results tomorrow. But grocery and department stores stock thousands of items that are purchased regularly. When retail stores advertise specials in the daily newspaper their main goal is to get customers into the store with the hope they will buy additional goods, or at least find that the store is a good place to shop regularly.

All you have to sell is cattle, and only a relative few at that. You can't offer bulls at below cost to create traffic through your place. Your advertising needs to build awareness of your business by making favourable, lasting impressions on potential customers. But even the most memorable advertising impressions fade with time. That's why repetition (ad frequency) is so important. Before the potential customer forgets, another impression is needed to re-enforce and build upon the last one.

The buying cycle for business to business products is different than the retail buying cycle. From the first impression to the actual purchaser of a bull, the cycle is measured in months or years, not days or weeks. Advertisers must take this into account.

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