

Marketing in Canada: What Makes Native Advertising Work



AN INTERVIEW WITH:

Ray Philipose

Vice President, Olive Audience, Olive Media

November 17, 2014

Ray Philipose, vice president of Olive Audience at Olive Media, a Toronto-based digital media company, believes that a lot of learning still needs to be done when it comes to native advertising. Philipose spoke with eMarketer's Rimma Kats about what makes native advertising so appealing, as well as some best practices.

eMarketer: What has been your experience with native advertising so far?

Ray Philipose: Native advertising is an incredible opportunity for advertisers and requires a lot of learning because we need to make sure that what we're presenting is a win for the advertiser, the publisher and the reader. That's only a win if the content itself is inherently compelling from a reader's perspective, but also accomplishes goals that a brand has.

Navigating that is tricky. Some publishers like BuzzFeed do a terrific job of insuring that the content is highly engaging.

In terms of learning, there is a lot of education required and there's a real art to it. You have to create content that meets the readers' and advertisers' needs, and something that the publisher is satisfied with as well.

eMarketer: What is required, in your opinion, for native advertising to be successful?

Philipose: The execution has to be a win for the three primary constituents—the publisher, the reader and the advertiser. We need to make sure the content works and that execution has sufficient scale.

“Marketers need to think not only about what their brand message is, but how to craft that in a way that the content is inherently compelling to the reader.”

eMarketer: What makes native so challenging to execute?

Philipose: The creation of content is one of the biggest challenges because marketers need to think not only about what their brand message is, but how to craft that in a way that the content is inherently compelling to the reader.

When it comes to a display ad you're pushing forward a message. In a native execution you have to draw the reader in. Not only does the headline have to be compelling, but you also have to deliver on the promise of the headline and the story itself. It's not good enough to just have a compelling headline. If the article feels like a bait and switch, clicked on, that could have a negative impact on the brand.

eMarketer: What makes native advertising so appealing?

Philipose: When the content works for the advertiser and the reader, the engagement rate can be very high. It can be much higher than a banner ad.

eMarketer: What are some best practices?

Philipose: Wherever possible, you should leverage a brand's existing content. As service providers, it's our job to ensure that we thoroughly examined where [all that content] is. Sometimes a media planner doesn't have time to do an exhaustive search of a brand's content assets.

It's important to leverage a brand's existing assets and curate it into compelling content. Another thing is to ensure that the experience feels natural and intuitive to the reader.

The content, while compelling to readers, should also satisfy the objectives of the brand. And, it's important to make sure that there's sufficient scale—that the content is seen and engaged by enough people that it validates the investment.

Learn more about the state of native advertising with the eMarketer reports, [“Native Advertising: 12 Best Practices from Leading Marketers”](#) and [“Native Advertising Update: Marketers See Healthy Spending Growth in 2015.”](#)

Interview conducted by Rimma Kats on November 17, 2014.