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SCAN ME

Nobody Reads Advertising the Way You Think They Do

By Anesa K. Chastain Jones - Advertising Insights with Anesa
Oklahoma’s *Choice Weekly*

When a business owner looks at an advertisement, they tend to look at everything. They read the headline, check the phone number, study the photograph, look at the logo and notice all the details that went into creating it.

Customers don’t usually do that.

Most people don’t sit down and carefully read an advertisement from top to bottom. They scan it. Their eyes move quickly across the page or screen, looking for something that catches their attention. It might be a photograph, a large headline, a price, a familiar logo or simply a few words that happen to relate to something they need.

That first glance can determine whether they keep reading or move on.

This is why visual hierarchy is such an important part of advertising. Visual hierarchy simply means arranging the elements of an advertisement so the reader naturally sees the most important information first, followed by the next most important information.

It sounds simple, but it’s one of the easiest things to get wrong.

A business owner understandably considers a lot of information important. The business name needs to be prominent. The phone number needs to stand out. The address matters. The website matters. The list of services matters. The sale price certainly matters. Before long, everything has been made bigger and bolder in an attempt to make sure nothing gets missed.

Unfortunately, when everything in an advertisement is competing for attention, nothing really wins.

A good advertisement gives the reader a clear place to begin. There should be one element that catches the eye first. From there, the design should naturally guide the reader to the next piece of information and then the next.

One simple way to evaluate an advertisement is what we call the three-second test. Look away from the ad, then look at it for only three seconds. Look away again and ask yourself what you remember.

Could you tell what was being advertised? Did you notice the main offer? Do you remember the name of the business?

If the most important message wasn’t obvious during that quick glance, the advertisement may be asking the reader to work too hard.

Size is one way to create visual hierarchy, but it isn’t the only way. Color, contrast, placement, photographs, typography and even empty space can help direct a person’s attention.

In fact, sometimes the best way to improve an advertisement isn’t to add something. It’s to take something away.

Businesses often feel obligated to fill every available inch of an ad because they paid for the space. That can lead to an advertisement packed with so much information that the reader

doesn’t know where to look.

White space is not wasted advertising space. Used correctly, it helps separate information and gives the most important parts of the advertisement room to stand out.

Before creating an ad, a business should answer one important question: If someone remembers only one thing from this advertisement, what should it be?

Maybe it’s a 50 percent off sale. Maybe you’re announcing a new location. Maybe you want people to know you offer storm damage repair. Maybe you’re introducing a new product or service.

Whatever that one message is, don’t make the customer search for it.

Once you’ve identified the first thing you want someone to see, decide what they need to know next. Then decide what comes third. That creates an order for the information instead of forcing every element of the advertisement to compete equally for attention.

It’s also important to remember that customers don’t have the same knowledge about your business that you do. You already know what your company sells, where you’re located and what your logo represents. Someone encountering your business for the first time may know none of those things.

Try looking at your advertisement from that person’s perspective.

Can they quickly tell what you’re selling? Is there a reason for them to care? Is it obvious what they should do next?

An effective advertisement doesn’t necessarily convince someone to read every single word. It makes sure they see the right words.

That’s an important difference.

Because whether an advertisement appears in a newspaper, on a website or in someone’s social media feed, it’s competing for attention. The businesses that understand how people actually look at advertising have a much better chance of getting it.

Oklahoma’s *Choice Weekly*

ANESA K. CHASTAIN JONES,
General Manager/ Graphics Director,
918-285-1314, graphics@oklahomaschoiceweekly.com

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Position and Color Requests: We will try to fulfill position and color requests whenever a preference is indicated. However, position is often dictated by press requirements. Position requests are most often fulfilled based on premium position charges, ad sizes, annual expenditures and use of color. Oklahoma’s Choice Weekly shall have full latitude with respect to positioning all advertisements.

Publisher’s Liability for Error: The publisher shall not be liable for slight changes or typographical errors that do not lessen the value of an advertisement. The publisher’s liability for errors or omissions in connection with an advertisement is strictly limited to the publication of the advertisement in any subsequent issue at no charge or the reversal of the charge for the advertisement, and will not exceed the cost of the 1st insertion of the error or omission. Credit allowed on the 1st insertion only. Any claim for allowance must be made within 5 days of initial publication of advertisement.

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Sweet Corn Casserole

A Taste of Oklahoma Summer

There are few things that say "late summer in Oklahoma" quite like fresh sweet corn. Whether it comes from a roadside stand, the local farmers market, or straight from the garden, it's one of the season's greatest rewards. This Sweet Corn Casserole turns those golden kernels into a warm, comforting side dish that's rich, creamy, and baked until perfectly golden.

It's just as welcome beside smoked brisket at a backyard cookout as it is on the table after a long day at the county fair. Simple ingredients, easy preparation, and plenty of homemade flavor make this a recipe you'll find yourself making long after summer comes to an end.

Sweet Corn Casserole

Serves 8

- 4 cups fresh sweet corn kernels (or frozen, thawed)
- 1 cup sour cream
- ½ cup melted butter
- 2 large eggs
- 1 cup shredded sharp cheddar cheese
- ¾ cup all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 tablespoon sugar (optional)
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- ½ teaspoon onion powder
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- Chopped parsley for garnish

Make It Your Own

- Add diced jalapeños for a little heat.
- Stir in cooked bacon for a smoky twist.
- Use pepper jack cheese instead of cheddar.
- Sprinkle Parmesan on top before baking for an extra golden crust.

OCW Kitchen Tip

Fresh corn cut directly from the cob gives this casserole the sweetest flavor, but frozen corn works beautifully year-round. If using frozen corn, thaw and drain it well before mixing.

Heat oven to 350°F. Grease a 9×13-inch baking dish.

In a large bowl, whisk together the sour cream, melted butter, and eggs until smooth.

Stir in the flour, baking powder, garlic powder, onion powder, sugar (if using), salt, and pepper. Fold in the sweet corn and cheddar cheese until everything is evenly combined.

Spread into the prepared baking dish.

Bake 40–45 minutes, or until the center is set and the top is lightly golden.

Let stand for about 10 minutes before serving.

Recipe at a Glance

- Prep: 15 min
- Cook: 45 min
- Serves: 8
- Difficulty: Easy
- Category: Side Dish

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3. Labor shortages:

Finding and retaining agricultural labor is a big crisis. The average age of farmers globally is rising, says the International Labour Organisation and the American Farm Bureau Foundation. In the U.S. and the European Union, the average farmer is nearly 60 years old. The AFBF reports that, despite increased wages, nearly

50 percent of farmers struggle to find enough workers to harvest seasonal crops.

4. Sustainability transitions:

Transitioning costs are high for the farmers who have opted to transition to more sustainable farming practices. Transitioning to Net Zero agriculture requires significant capital, according to the World Economic Forum. The WEF estimates there is a multi-trillion dollar investment gap to move global agriculture toward sustainable practices. And while regenerative farming improves soil health, the initial transition period can produce yield variations that threaten the livelihoods of small farmers.

5. Digital divide: The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development has raised concerns that small scale farmers lack the infrastructure like high-speed internet necessary to use tools designed to increase efficiency. Plus, groups like the National Farmers Union have testified that software locks on farming equipment create dependency on manufacturers that can strip farmers of their independence. Modern farmers face various challenges that have persisted for ages and also newer problems tied to the modern, increasingly technology-based world.





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Conserving Fuel As Prices Rise

Fuel is a necessity for millions of drivers on the country's roadways. According to a recent report from Experian Automotive, approximately 1.4 percent of the 292.3 million cars and trucks on the road in the United States in 2024 were electric. Even though the number of EVs is rising, there are still plenty of people behind the wheels of gas-powered vehicles that require routine fill-ups.

other changes, or notifies the driver when they are driving in a manner that is using fuel wisely. Driving above 50 miles per hour reduces fuel economy considerably.

- **Practice smooth driving.** Drivers should avoid aggressive starts (gunning it) and hard braking, which can eat into fuel efficiency. Letting off the accelerator early and coasting to red lights or stop signs helps.

- **Rely on cruise control.** Cruise control helps maintain a steady speed, which can save fuel on highway travel.

- **Keep tires inflated.** Properly inflating tires to the manufacturer's recommended PSI can improve fuel economy by roughly 0.6 percent to 3 percent for most drivers, offers the U.S. Department of Energy. Driving on tires that are 20 percent under-inflated can reduce fuel economy by as much as 10 percent. Removing unnecessary heavy items from the vehicle also can help to reduce drag.



As of late March 2026, Canadian gas prices surged to an average of roughly \$1.68-\$1.86 per liter (there are roughly 3.785 liters in a gallon). The national average gas price in the United States at the same time was \$3.98 per gallon. When gas prices rise due to various factors, drivers are increasingly interested in ways to conserve fuel and stretch their dollars further. Here are some ways to mitigate rising gas prices.

- **Reduce your speed.** Driving at moderate speeds increases efficient consumption of fuel. Some vehicles may feature an 'ECO' mode that optimizes fuel consumption by restricting engine power, among

- **Limit idling and combine trips.** Turn off the vehicle when stopped for more than a few minutes. When running errands, combine short trips to keep the engine warm, which is more efficient.

- **Skip the premium fuel.** Unless a vehicle owner's manual specifically recommends filling up with premium fuel, drivers will not see an increase in performance by choosing this more expensive option, offers Progressive Insurance. A person will just be paying more for premium, which is always more expensive than standard 87-octane fuel. Drivers can use various strategies to conserve fuel when gas becomes more expensive.

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Thursday, January 5, 2023
VOLUME 3 ISSUE 35

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