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MORE ON ADVERTISING

If we had a competitor who was able to make the claims that will follow in this column, our industry would be facing an even tougher battle than we are already facing.

If this competitor had the following facts behind them, would we be helpless to combat them?

According to a recent survey by Susquehanna Polling and Research:

- 1- 85% of the people who use this mystery medium said they are “very likely” to vote.
- 2- In addition, respondents named this medium as the most trusted source of information about candidates running for public office.
- 3- When respondents rated how much they trusted a source’s information, this medium topped all other media.

We’re not talking about Facebook or Direct Mail. In fact, according to the survey, those two media that many believe are eating our collective lunches have far less impact than the advertising “experts” insist, especially on the *trustworthy* scale.

The medium I’m talking about was given an ‘8’ on a scale of one-to-ten on the importance of having access to public notices from local governments.

According to the survey, this medium is also the leading source for shopping decisions and advertising content. In fact, 79% of respondents agree that this mystery medium “provides valuable local shopping and advertising information.”

Further, 24% of respondents rate this media as their go-to source for local purchasing decisions, beating out all other media.

If you’ve read this far, I’m sure you realize that we’re not talking about a competitor at all. You know that all these “unbeatable” facts are true about our own industry: community newspapers.

So what will we do with the nuggets from this survey? I hope we are carrying out a plan to share this good news with every advertising decision-maker that we possibly can.

Publish them in house ads. (Missouri Press will build some for you, if you’d like.) Add them to the signature line of your emails. Put together attractive literature for your advertising reps to distribute to their customers and prospects. Shout these facts from the mountaintops. Hire a guy to drive around town with loudspeakers on his truck, declaring these truths like Barney Fife did when he was running for Sheriff of Mayberry. (see Episode 148, Season 5, from 1965.)

Whatever it takes, we need to spread the word. WE are the “unbeatable” competitor.