

LOTUS BOISE CORP

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# What Treasure Valley Businesses Are Spending on Advertising

And What's Actually Working

*A market-level look at what local campaigns cost, which channels are producing results, and the mistakes that waste the most money.*

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## You're trying to answer a simple question.

You know you need to advertise. You're not sure what it should cost, what to expect, or who to believe. Every rep you talk to has a different number and a different pitch. The agency wants a retainer. The Google guy says radio is dead. The radio rep says digital is a waste. Nobody will give you a straight answer about what businesses like yours are actually spending in this market.

### This guide does.

Everything here is based on real campaign data from Treasure Valley businesses across multiple categories. No client names, but real numbers from real campaigns that ran in this market in the last 12 months.

## What does advertising actually cost in the Boise market?

There is no single answer, but there are ranges that hold across most categories. Here's what Treasure Valley businesses are typically spending on campaigns that produce measurable results.

### Radio

Radio campaigns in this market start at around \$750/month. At that level you're building frequency on one station in select dayparts — it's a real campaign, but a focused one. Most businesses running radio that produces consistent, measurable web traffic lift are in the \$2,000–\$6,000/month range depending on station, daypart mix, and spot count.

The difference between \$750 and \$3,000 isn't just "more ads." It's the difference between reaching your audience a few times a week and reaching them enough times that they remember your name when they need what you sell.

### Digital

Programmatic display campaigns can start as low as \$500/month with geo and demographic targeting. Streaming TV (OTT/CTV) campaigns typically start at \$1,500/month. Social advertising (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok) can run effectively at \$1,000–\$2,500/month with proper geo-targeting. Online audio, mobile location, and other digital products fall in the \$1,000–\$3,000/month range depending on targeting and geography.

### Radio + Digital Together

The most common combination in this market starts at around \$1,500/month total. Businesses running larger campaigns that produce consistent, measurable results typically land in the \$3,000–\$8,000/month range depending on category, station selection, and digital mix. The radio builds broad awareness. The digital extends and reinforces it. Running both from the same team means the strategy is coordinated instead of siloed.

|                                                |                                                 |                                             |
|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| <b>\$750+</b><br>Radio campaign starting point | <b>\$500+</b><br>Digital display starting point | <b>\$1,500+</b><br>Radio + digital combined |
|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|

*These are not rate card numbers. They are what businesses in this market are spending on campaigns that produced results we could actually measure.*

## What's actually working right now in the Treasure Valley

**The campaign works as a system.** The businesses seeing the strongest results in this market are not measuring radio in one report and digital in another. They're looking at the total picture: did website traffic go up? Did phone calls increase? Did more people walk in? Are we busier than we were before we started?

The individual channels contribute to that outcome together — radio creates the awareness, digital extends and reinforces it, and the result shows up across every metric at once. Trying to isolate which channel “caused” a phone call misses the point. The combination caused it.

|                                                                         |                                                                    |                                                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>857%</b><br>Website session lift on air days —<br>medical aesthetics | <b>63%</b><br>Of all web traffic driven by radio —<br>plumbing co. | <b>207%</b><br>More sessions on air days vs. off —<br>nonprofit |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|

*Real results from Treasure Valley campaigns in the last 12 months.*

Those numbers don't credit one tactic. They show what happened to the business when the full campaign was running.

### Radio + digital outperforms either channel alone

When a business runs radio and pairs it with digital (streaming audio, OTT, social, display), the overall marketing results improve — more web traffic, more calls, more walk-ins. Not because any single tactic got better, but because the audience is hearing and seeing the same business across multiple environments throughout the day. That repetition across channels is what builds the familiarity that turns a stranger into a customer. Measuring them separately defeats the purpose of running them together.

### Frequency matters more than reach

Spreading a budget across four stations at three spots each looks like more advertising. It is not. The research on effective frequency is clear — a listener needs to hear a message multiple times before it registers. Three spots per week on four stations means nobody hears you enough on any of them. Thirty spots per week on one station means your audience actually remembers your name.

### Six months is the minimum for a real evaluation

Some categories (healthcare, home services) show inbound response within 30 days. But brand awareness and recall — the thing that makes someone call you instead of the other guy when they need what you sell — builds over 3–6 months of consistent presence. Businesses that quit at 8 weeks almost always quit before the return was about to show up.

# The three mistakes that waste the most money

We see the same patterns in campaigns that underperform. Almost every one traces back to one of these three structural problems.

## **Mistake 1: Spending below the frequency floor**

There is a minimum number of spots per week required for a listener to hear your message enough times to remember it. That number depends on the station and daypart, but it is never “3 spots a week.” A budget that cannot support adequate frequency on at least one station is a budget that will produce nothing measurable — and then the business owner concludes that radio doesn’t work. It was not radio that failed. It was the math.

## **Mistake 2: Running for 4–6 weeks and stopping**

Short flights are useful for event promotion and limited-time offers. They are not useful for building the kind of awareness that changes buying behavior. A campaign that stops at six weeks is like a gym membership you use for one month — you didn’t give it enough time to produce the result you were paying for.

## **Mistake 3: Hiring three vendors for three channels**

When your radio is managed by one company, your social by a freelancer, and your display by a national agency, nobody is looking at the full picture. The radio drives awareness that shows up in web traffic the digital team doesn’t know to watch for. The social campaign targets a different audience than the radio buy. The reporting comes in three different formats and nobody can connect it back to what actually happened for the business. One team running one strategy means the whole campaign is designed as a system, measured as a system, and adjusted as a system.

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## How to evaluate any advertising recommendation you receive

Before you commit to any campaign — with us or anyone else — ask these five questions.

### **1. What specific business outcome is this campaign designed to produce?**

If the answer is “brand awareness” or “impressions,” ask what that means for your phone, your website, or your foot traffic. Awareness is a mechanism, not a result.

### **2. What is the minimum budget required for this to work?**

Any honest media partner will tell you there is a floor. If they don’t mention one, they’re taking your money regardless of whether the campaign can produce results at that level.

### **3. How will we measure whether this is working?**

The answer should focus on business outcomes: total website traffic trends, phone call volume, foot traffic, revenue. A good campaign improves the overall picture. Be skeptical of anyone who promises to tell you exactly which click or which ad caused each sale — marketing doesn’t work that way. The channels work together. The measurement should reflect that.

#### **4. How long before we should expect to see results?**

The honest answer for most campaigns is 60–90 days for direct response signals and 4–6 months for brand recall effects. Anyone promising results in two weeks is either selling event promotion or overselling.

#### **5. What happens if it's not working at 90 days?**

The right answer is: we look at the data, diagnose the problem (creative, frequency, targeting, station selection), and adjust. The wrong answer is: we run the same thing for another 90 days and hope.

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## **What to do next**

If you're a Treasure Valley business owner trying to figure out what advertising should look like for your budget and your category, we'll show you. No pitch, no obligation.

In 30 minutes we can walk through what competitors in your category are spending, which audiences they're reaching, and what a realistic campaign looks like for your budget.

**Ready to see what this looks like for your business?**

Call 208-344-3511 or visit [lotusboise.com/contact](https://lotusboise.com/contact)

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