

CASE STUDY: TELEVISION STATION

Can Good Research Help a TV Station Better Understand its Brand (and Sell More Ads)?



CHALLENGE

Like almost all other stations in the U.S., KUSI has traditionally relied on Nielsen ratings to convey the quantitative value of their newscast viewership to prospective advertisers. After all, Nielsen ratings tell how many households are viewing each station's newscast in a given market.

Nielsen ratings, however, poorly account for multiple viewers in a household, fail to provide out-of-home coverage (gyms, bars, airports and other public spaces) and miss the popularity of streaming and internet formats entirely. This creates a blind spot to the measurement of a station's news popularity, as well as the brand loyalty drivers behind it.

For this reason, KUSI wondered if custom public opinion research could supply novel insights about public perception of the KUSI news brand. Simply knowing that KUSI newscasts are popular in San Diego was not enough. The KUSI management team wanted to improve their programming, and demonstrate to prospective advertisers the total KUSI value proposition.

RESPONSE

After consultation with Competitive Edge, KUSI commissioned statistically-sound public opinion research to benchmark viewership of KUSI newscasts, identify viewership drivers, determine key KUSI brand attributes, measure the value of on-air talent and ultimately derive a series of market insights.

ORGANIZATION PROFILE



KUSI is one of the top 3 independent, fully-local television stations in the country, owned and operated by San Diego-based McKinnon Broadcasting. Producing more local on-air content than any TV station in San Diego, KUSI helps more local businesses connect with more of the 3.3 million San Diegans than any other station. It bills itself as San Diego's *More Local News* station.

Benchmarking would include viewership of network cable television news, streaming services and competing local stations. Drivers and brand attributes would include perceptions of Attitude, Political Slant, Local Focus and Problem-Solving, among many others. Also, CERC would gauge consumer awareness of KUSI's *NewsOn* streaming service.

SOLUTION

CERC designed a 500-person mixed-mode research poll to be conducted by telephone (landline and cell), email and text-invite-to-web across San Diego County. The sample encompassed the entirety of the San Diego television viewing market across core demographics of age, income, race and ideology.

The proposed identification of key viewership drivers and brand attributes would likewise provide a full picture of the San Diego television market across all major KUSI competitors, in order to highlight KUSI's strengths and weaknesses. The survey would also measure the brand awareness and popularity of on-air personalities.



KEY RESULTS

CERC determined that more San Diegans regularly watch KUSI News than any other station, principally because it outpaces rival stations on the most important brand attribute of Attitude. San Diegans value an upbeat and positive attitude from their newscasters, and KUSI delivers.

However, the station did not fare as well on the second most important attribute of Political coverage. Thus, CERC concretely identified the demographic viewership whose improvement would send KUSI head-and-shoulders above its nearest competitor on this measure.

KUSI was proven the unequivocal Local News Leader and Problem Solver. CERC also found that the *NewsOn* streaming service is flying under the public's radar, and suggested areas for improvement.

In terms of on-air talent, CERC was able to show that some KUSI personalities were conclusively responsible for more viewership than others. This provided management the confidence to make personnel decisions, and general direction on how to improve talent performance.

These key insights and others uncovered by Competitive Edge provided KUSI a set of public opinion findings with which it has been able to shape programming, and supply a clear 360-degree value proposition to prospective advertisers.

Now, KUSI supplements Nielsen data with *comprehensive* viewership metrics when pitching advertisers. KUSI is also able to show advertisers the qualitative benefits of aligning with the upbeat and positive KUSI *More Local News* brand of television.



Looking for insight in your campaign? Look to Competitive Edge Research & Communication. Contact us to discuss your campaign research needs.