



## INNOVATION: Regional TV Marketing

In October 2000, the regional television broadcasters founded Regional Television Marketing (RTM); an organisation dedicated to promoting the specific benefits of regional TV. We talk to RTM's General Manager about the organisation's innovative approach.

Regional TV Marketing's General Manager, Brian Hogan, says, "Our role is not only to educate and inform the market as a whole about audience size and consumer profiles, we also work directly with individual advertisers and their agencies to demonstrate RTV effectiveness and its potential to improve advertising return on investment."

Taking an innovative approach to proving their category, RTM has invested in a wide range of research services which are then utilised in working with individual clients. This data fills an information gap in the market.

"We use a unique regionally aligned version of Roy Morgan Single Source, supermarket sales data broken out to regional TV markets, car sales data broken out to regional markets and ABS data on household expenditure split out to regional TV markets," Mr Hogan says.

"We also monitor social and business trends in regional Australia via mainstream media so we can advise on issues such as seachange, aging population, urbanisation, industry and employment outlooks and so on."

The most important trends and findings are published in regular research reports and numerous case studies have been published by RTM, demonstrating regional Free TV's effectiveness in driving sales and building brands.

"Offering accountability on advertising investment to regional TV advertisers through tracking regional sales response has been innovative within our competitive space. It's very effective because it's hard to argue with the numbers," Mr Hogan says.

Mr Hogan says the message is getting through. "Over the last year or so I have been pleased to see agency strategists and advertisers start to approach RTM for advice on how to maximise their growth and return from regional markets."

He says solid, accountable information also helps address some common misconceptions about the regional television market.

"The perceptions of regional Australia naturally tend to the view that the markets are less populated or less developed than the reality (but) I believe perceptions have changed enormously in the past five years and there is a more widespread acknowledgment of the socioeconomic profile of the majority of regional Australians broadly matching those of city dwellers," Mr Hogan says.

"People now distinguish between the small number of people in regional markets who live in remote rural areas and the majority who live in the coastal towns and cities."

By taking a new approach, Regional TV Marketing has improved general awareness of the market and demonstrated the benefits of regional Free TV to advertisers.

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