



SPORTS+ENTERTAINMENT+MEDIA SILVER WINNER USA Network In Plain Sight

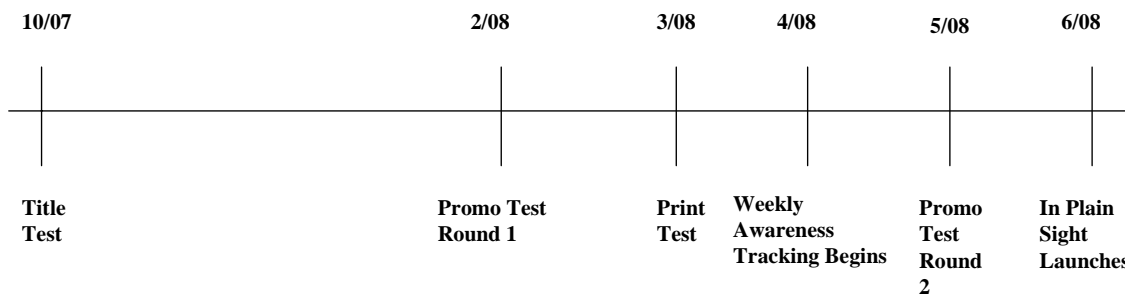
Business Situation and Campaign Objectives

USA Network had the number one new series of the year on cable in both 2006 with *Psych* and in 2007 with *Burn Notice* and *The Starter Wife*. In 2008, USA hoped to maintain that record with the new series *In Plain Sight*, a show starring Mary McCormack as a U.S. Marshal working in the witness protection program. The USA marketing team set out to launch the series with a campaign that would meet the following objectives: 1) to create awareness of the series among current USA viewers and potential new viewers and 2) to generate interest in watching the series among these consumers so that they would make a point to tune in to the show.

The success of *In Plain Sight* was important to USA not only because of the interest in having the #1 new series of the year, but also because the network was working towards the goals of being the #1 rated cable network for 2Q08 and for 2008 overall. With these objectives in mind, the USA marketing and research groups worked together throughout the campaign on a variety of research projects. The details of that partnership are outlined below.

Research Story

Several research projects were designed to help the marketing group 1) confirm what it was about the show that consumers were most interested in, 2) identify which messages were working best among specific target groups so that the most appropriate spots/executions could be selected for each part of the campaign, and 3) track awareness of and intent to view the series so that any issues could be addressed by making changes to the campaign once in the marketplace.



Title Test

In October 2007 ten potential titles for *In Plain Sight* were tested to determine which title was most appealing to consumers on its own and which one worked best to communicate what the series is about. Titles were tested using an online survey.

Research found that *In Plain Sight* was a strong option as a title for the series. On its own, it successfully communicated the premise of the show and was described as “catchy.” Respondents who selected it as a favorite thought that it accurately described the half-hidden situation of Mary’s clients in witness protection and that it was an enjoyable, clever, and ironic play on the common phrase “hidden in plain sight.” It also evoked the secret life Mary kept from her quirky family and

was intriguing and dramatic. Research also found that the title was equally appealing among both men and women.

Promo Tests

Promo tests were conducted twice during the course of the campaign in February 2008 to test the first slate of spots created by marketing and then again in May 2008 to test the spots being used in the next phase of the campaign. The goal of the research was to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the TV spots individually and overall. For both tests, online surveys were conducted using a monadic design.

With both rounds of promo testing, we learned that intent to view In Plain Sight was high, particularly compared to other series that had been tested. Respondents were interested in the series because it looked funny, action-filled and different from other shows on TV. They also thought the cast looked appealing, particularly Mary McCormack. Many commented that they like crime dramas in general and were looking forward to seeing a series that focused on witness protection. USA's reputation for "good" shows was also driving interest in checking out the show. Those who said they were not interested in watching In Plain Sight cited reasons such as a lack of interest in the genre overall, a perceived similarity to other shows already on TV and objection to "offensive" dialogue and scenes about sex.

Based on the promo tests, most of the spots were generating greater interest among women who were interested in the idea of a show with a strong, likeable female lead. Men responded best to the spots that they found to be most "action-filled" and "funny." Viewers also perceived In Plain Sight as a good fit for USA's Characters Welcome brand.

Based on these tests, research:

- Identified and recommended using the most universally appealing spot for off channel and cross channel placement.
- Recommended that when targeting men, use spots that highlight the action and comedy in the series.
- Learned that themes about sex are problematic for some potential viewers who found certain pieces of the dialogue and footage to be offensive and not family-friendly so that we could keep an eye on feedback in this area throughout awareness tracking.

Print Test

In March 2008, two different print executions for In Plain Sight were being considered. Variables in question were the tagline and the color of the title. The ads were tested as part of an online survey.

Based on the print test, research found that respondents who saw the ads that used the color grey for the title were significantly more likely to correctly remember the title of the series than the respondents who saw the title in a different color. Therefore, it was recommended that marketing use the grey text in the print ad.

Regarding the tagline, respondents liked both taglines equally, with no significant differences between which they selected as a favorite. However, qualitatively we found that one tagline was communicating the funny tone of the series while the other didn't bring to life the humor at all. From the promo tests, we learned that humor was one of the core attributes attracting viewers, so it was recommended that the tagline that let viewers know they could expect some comedy in the series be used in the print ad.

Awareness Tracking

Weekly tracking of the awareness and interest in watching In Plain Sight started in April 2008, six weeks before the premiere date. This allowed us to continually monitor how these two metrics compared to marketplace norms and to make sure there weren't issues with any specific demographic groups so that any concerns could be addressed by marketing during the course of the campaign. Data used was from the OTX syndicated study TV Dailies as well as from internal online surveys.

Six weeks before the premiere of In Plain Sight, awareness of and interest in watching In Plain Sight was even among men and women. At five weeks and four weeks before the premiere, however, interest among women fell and was lower than both the cable norm and interest among men. We knew from promo testing that women had expressed strong interest in the series and liked the idea of a strong female lead. We had also learned that there were potential viewers who found some of the content to be offensive and others who were turned off by the idea that In Plain Sight was just like all of the other "cop shows" out there. By analyzing the verbatim responses to open end questions in OTX TV Dailies and our own internal studies we found that these issues were in fact problematic in the marketplace. In the promo tests, research had identified which spots were the worst offenders when it came to these issues, and based on the tracking data, recommended that marketing pull those spots out of the rotation for the remainder of the campaign. The results of this recommendation are detailed in the business results section.

Campaign Description

The marketing campaign for Season 1 of In Plain Sight began on April 7, 2008 and ran throughout the series, which ended on August 17, 2008. The target audiences for the campaign included current USA Network viewers, crime fiction fans, procedural fans, television drama fans, and entertainment enthusiasts in the A18-54 demographic.

The media plan consisted of four phases:

- 1) Early awareness, to seed the In Plain Sight name and message into the marketplace. Began on 4/7/08 and included:
 - USA Network on-air tease campaign
 - Out of home tease campaign in NY and LA
- 2) Buzz building, to develop unique and digital guerilla programs to create chatter about In Plain Sight. Began on 5/5/08 and included:
 - Facebook viral applications
 - Witness Protection Challenge – Play the Role of a US Marshal
 - Sweepstakes to win weekly prizes (online, street teams)
 - Viral outreach including blogger engagement, word of mouth seeding, video clip distribution, search optimization
 - Interactive games and web exclusives (video, text messages, profilers) on usanetwork.com
 - A mobile fan club
- 3) Tune in, to spread the message to the wider potential audience and to encourage maximum sampling among the core target. Began on 5/12/08 and included:
 - Promotional spots on USA, the NBCU family of networks and other cable networks
 - Internet ads on portals, TV sites, entertainment sites and a variety of other websites

- Grand Central Station domination
 - Additional out of home
 - Ambient media in airports, grocery stores, taxis, malls, and beaches
 - Print campaign in major magazine and newspaper publications such as People, Entertainment Weekly, TV Guide, The New York Times, The LA Times, etc.
 - Radio spots and promotions
- 4) Continuity, to grow the audience and minimize attrition. Began on 6/9/08 and included:
- Spot cable
 - Spot radio
 - Out of home
 - Digital
 - Affiliate support

Creative executions: Creative examples submitted.

Business Results

The research conducted for In Plain Sight allowed USA to:

- ✓ Determine that viewers were most interested in In Plain Sight because of the action, comedy, cast and because of USA's reputation for entertaining shows.
- ✓ Understand that those who said that they did not want to watch In Plain Sight were turned off by certain language and scenes that focused on sex or because In Plain Sight didn't stand out as a show that was going to be any different from other series already on TV.
- ✓ Identify the specific spot that was most universally appealing to all demographic groups so that it could be used off channel.
- ✓ Identify which title was going to work best for the show.
- ✓ Figure out which tagline and title execution would work best for the print campaign.
- ✓ Track awareness and interest in viewing to see how it was trending week to week and also compare In Plain Sight to competitive norms and other series to make sure the messages were reaching the target audience.

Consumer awareness:

- ✓ At the time of the premiere, total awareness for In Plain Sight was nearly double what it was six weeks before the premiere and well above the cable norm . Awareness also rose among USA viewers, and was higher than any prior week.

Consumer Interest:

- ✓ Definite interest among those aware of In Plain Sight started below the cable norm six weeks before the premiere, but increased throughout the campaign and achieved a score above the cable norm by the week of the premiere.
- ✓ Looking at men and women separately, interest started out at the same place among both demos but then dropped among women. After research identified which messages were the cause for the drop and marketing adjusted the campaign, interest among women doubled, rose above the cable norm and stayed there until the time of the premiere. This change is reflected in the quantitative data below and also in comments from viewers in our research studies, such as: *"I've noticed a change in the advertising tactics used in the ad spots for this upcoming show. when the ads started, i had intended to watch the show once or twice to see what it was like, but held out little hope as to it's durability. the first ads depicted a trashy, blond agent with the focus on her trailer-trash like*

personal life. the new ads which have been airing over the past few weeks are showing a more drama-centric twist with a compassionate agent who works hard the the witnesses in her charge...”

In Plain Sight Nielsen Ratings Success:

- ✓ In Plain Sight was the #1 new cable show of 2008 among both key demographics, A18-54 and A18-49. Among new scripted series in 2008, In Plain Sight ranked better than Leverage on TNT and Secret Life of an American Teenager on ABC Family.
- ✓ After concerns throughout the campaign about the appeal of the show among women, the audience for the premiere of In Plain Sight was popular among both men and women.

Channel Success:

- ✓ USA Network was the #1 cable network of 2008 and In Plain Sight helped USA reach the goal of ranking as the #1 cable network for the second quarter of 2008.
- ✓ In Plain Sight was also successful at bringing new viewers to the network.