



Introduction

Media planning for an alcoholic beverage company, such as NoDa, can be a bit tricky due to certain, typically self-regulated, stipulations. As I understand it, such advertisements are meant to be placed on sites where 70% or more of the audience is reasonably expected to be of legal drinking age. While I do not have a lot of data to be able to make that claim, I attempted to choose sites and blogs that I felt would likely meet that criteria. Despite the challenges, there is certainly still a space for advertising beer brands online. The following are places online where NoDa would likely find solid return on investment.

Websites

[The Charlotte Observer](#): *The Observer* is one of the largest newspapers in the state, and the newspaper of record for the Charlotte area. It serves the Queen City citizen looking for local news, sports and weather. There is also ample opportunity to advertise, as that is a large source of revenue for a newspaper website. Additionally, it is probably safe to assume that the majority of the site's audience is of legal drinking age. Of course, there is always the danger with a news site of an ad being placed near a story about a DUI or alcohol related death, which would be a bad look for the brand, but hopefully that could be avoided with the diversity of news and sections on the site. I did not notice any other alcohol brands advertising on the site, but that does not necessarily mean that NoDa could not. The craft beer drinker, and NoDa's target audience, is likely to have an interest in local news, and also more likely to read *The Observer* online versus print.

[Charlotte Agenda](#): This website is for a sophisticated Charlotte audience, and fits well with the craft beer drinker demographic NoDa would seek to target. It even has a food and drink section, so it fits well with the content, in addition to being localized. The site also claims to "love local advertising". Charlotte Agenda's audience, according to their advertising page, gets over 250,000 unique visitors per month. 75% of its audience is 18-44. 95% have college degrees, and 35% have graduate degrees. 61% eat out seven or more times per month, and thus are likely to go out for drinks, or have a beer with dinner as well. It is also fairly well balanced in terms of gender breakdown, with a 56/44% female/male ratio. The metrics are favorable, and they should be, as the ad placements on the site seem pretty expensive. Those statistics mesh well with the

target audience for NoDa, and it is a hyper-local site, which makes sense for the brand because its distribution is largely within the Charlotte metro area.

[Charlotte Magazine](#): This magazine website offers a chance, according to Alexa.com data, to reach more of the female audience. While females represent more of a tertiary audience for NoDa, they are, of course, important to reach none the less. The magazine site not only has a food and drink section, but a specific beer sub-section, so it is definitely something it has a bit of focus on editorially. It is, once again, a very localized site in terms of content, which fits the current reach of NoDa's distribution. There is also a pretty good amount of ad space on the site where messages could be placed. Much like the other sites, I did not notice any alcohol brands advertising on the site currently, but that does not necessarily mean it is not a possibility.

[Creative Loafing Charlotte](#): The Charlotte branch of Creative Loafing has roots as an alternative newsweekly that covers a variety of topic areas, including food and beverage, arts and music. The website stays true to a lot of that spirit, and covers a lot of local cultural happenings. It even did a local beer guide, so editorially it is a nice fit with the brand. The site has plenty of traditional ad placement opportunities as well.

Blogs

[We Love CLT](#) This blog is slightly dormant, and might remain that way. However, it will also add one's company badge, which links to said company's website, to the bottom of the home page for free* (the company simply has to add the #weloveclt badge, or link to its site in return). Adding a link or badge to the site is a small price to pay. In fact, it displays local pride and promotes a hashtag that is more active than the site right now. It might not have the best metrics right now, but it's hard to find (essentially) free placement anywhere on the internet, so on the chance it comes back strong, or someone stumbles upon it--as I did, why not have the brand's badge displayed? In fact, this might even skirt the strict definition of advertising, but there is some "payment" occurring.

[CLTure](#): A southeast music, food and arts blog with 80% of its readership coming from Charlotte. It fits with the NoDa target audience's cultural interests in food and the arts. Almost 60% of the audience, according to its media kit, are aged 25-44, and well educated, which is also within the main target audience demographics. Editorially it is a great fit, as they write about food, beverage and the arts, among other things that mesh well with the brand. They also have plenty of ad space, and even a history of having craft beer brands advertise on it--in fact, right now Devil's Backbone has some ads on the site.

[Charlotte Beer](#): This blog is very hypothetical in terms of placing NoDa ads because it does not appear to have any advertising on it right now--save for some shameless plugs for the blog editor's books on Charlotte beer. However, this site is too perfectly aligned for it not to warrant a mention as a great place to place a NoDa ad, should the site ever start accepting such a thing. It is a blog, as the name would suggest, strictly about the Charlotte craft beer scene. The editor is one of the main authorities on the subject, as his two books would suggest. It has been named "Best Local Blog" by the readers of Creative Loafing, among other awards, so it has a strong reputation in the area. Again, the question is if the blog would ever be open to accepting advertising from beer brands it covers, such as NoDa, but the space would be excellent for the brand should it ever become available, thus it deserves to be mentioned.

Types/Sizes of Advertising Units

I designed a couple different options for sizes and types of ads to be placed online. I think the "medium rectangle" (300x250) size provides good versatility because nearly every site has space for that kind of ad. I also made a "leaderboard" (728x90) sized ad that could be paired with a medium rectangle or hold its own on in a header of sites that allow for that ad space. Both of those are based on the IAB standards. I think the brand would be able to leverage creative at most any size, but those two are pretty standard and allow for placement on the top, side, or bottom of a page depending on budget and how the web page is laid out.

Creative

The examples that follow give a basic idea of what the creative would look like for the brand online. I wanted to highlight the beer, along with the traditional NoDa brand colors, and have fairly minimal, one line or so of copy with a simple call to action button. The ad would link to the [brew finder](#) page on the NoDa site, so the user can literally "find a pint" as the button suggests. Since the product cannot be sold online, the typical logical place to link, this leads to the next best thing: where to find it near where you are.

Medium Rectangle A



Medium Rectangle B



Leaderboard

