

Pro Football Pick'em Scores \$125K for the *State Journal-Register*



Incorporation of advertiser's VIP picks lead to highest revenue total ever

Case Study Highlights

- \$125,000 in revenue
- More than 20 sponsors and advertisers
- Enormous staff support and excitement

The Idea

Last year, while working at the smallest daily I have ever worked at – the *State Journal-Register* in Springfield, Illinois – we looked to generate more revenue with football than ever before.

The Marty Carry Pro Football Contest Model has been tested in 3 states for all sizes of weeklies and dailies.

The Execution

Though we had much success with this contest in the past, we incorporated two new components to last year's contest. The first new addition was our New Media Panel: we secured local newspaper, radio, and TV sports personalities go head to head each week.



We also added an extra promotion for the best picks each week. Readers who picked better than our entire media panel were printed weekly in the newspaper. We also recognized the media sponsor with the best record each week. Finally, the advertiser with the best record each week earned a free repeat ad.

Chad Slack of Savoy, IL was the winner from last week - Congrats Chad!



Week 3 Panel Champ

Sam Madonia - 13 Correct

Sam was out-picked by only 7 of our local players. These 7 folks, to the right, have bragging rights for the week!

Week 3 Best Reader Picks

1st Place - Chad Slack, Savoy, IL - 14

2nd Place - Bob Buskis, Althens, IL - 14

Honorable Mentions

Trevor Lawrence, Springfield, IL - 14

Gary Reed, Springfield, IL - 14

Dan Keller, Jacksonville, IL - 14

Bill Lynch, Springfield, IL - 14

Rob Bartlett, Springfield, IL - 14

We offered a variety of advertising packages and incentives. Print advertising ran for 23 consecutive weeks with center spread of sports on Sundays. Each advertiser was provided with one pickup each week, and an additional pickup provided to advertiser with the best picks each week. A full-page color ad was awarded to the advertiser with best record for the whole season. The advertiser's VIP picks listed on Upickem site.

We relied a lot on buy-in from our sales team. First, we split our staff into teams with “coaches”, provide spiffs and competition for the teams to perform. We made sure they were prepared to sell by creating a plan book with in-depth materials for them including: reference sheet, mini spec layout, sales sheet, and customized program agreement.

We had a four-week sales contest, and each week ending with Football Fridays! Furthermore, we create sales incentives. Staff members earned \$100 per single box sale, \$150 per double box sale. The sales team with highest revenue total won a pizza party plus an additional \$100 to each team member with at least one sale.

The Results

With more than 20 sponsors and advertisers, the promotion brought in \$125,000 – our highest revenue total ever!

The key to success last year was to sell sponsorships as an integrated print and online promotion. The weekly recognition of winners was effective and helped keep everyone excited about the contest. We wanted our staff, VIP picks, and community to have a great time with these promotion, and we believe it showed in our overall success!