

AMC Mobile Tour Promotes 'Breaking Bad'

by [David Goetzl](#), Jan 14, 2010, 5:29 PM

The lead character in AMC's "Breaking Bad" runs his drug-dealing enterprise from a revolting RV. To promote the third season, the network is going with a much plusher vehicle. Next month, a truck with a 90-seat theater -- replete with stadium seating and high-def screen -- will begin a coast-to-coast journey to plug the series.

Tabbed the "Breaking Bad Screening Lab," the promobile will offer a seven-and-a-half-minute sizzle reel aimed at people who have missed seasons one or two.

"Everybody felt very strongly that the show was the most powerful tool we could use," said Theresa Beyer, AMC's head of promotion. "Once you see even a bit of it, it's very difficult not to get totally caught up in the vortex that is Walter White."

In the Emmy-winning series, the captivating White (played by Bryan Cranston) is a teacher diagnosed with advanced cancer, who becomes a crystal meth kingpin to secure financial security for his family.

Leading up to the March 21 third-season premiere, the road show will stop in 12 markets, from Miami to Los Angeles. AMC is aiming for the attraction to engage people for about 10 minutes -- with the video, some interactive gimmicks and brand ambassadors handing out opportunities for a free iTunes download.

"The medium of live pays back in a big way," Beyer said.

DirecTV and Sony Pictures Television have signed on as tour sponsors. Both will have signage on the promobile and elsewhere at a Web site. Sony, which is a producer of the show, will promote the second-season "Breaking Bad" DVD and Blu-ray version.

The six-week tour is a supplement to a more traditional and wider-reaching media plan for the new season. Beyer expects about 200,000 people to stream into the mobile theater. There will also be innumerable impressions generated from what is effectively a traveling billboard as the truck covers thousands of miles.

The trek will begin Feb. 6 with a stop at a DirecTV-sponsored event in South Florida to coincide with the Super Bowl. There's a stop further north at the site of the Daytona 500 NASCAR race. Later, the truck pulls into Albuquerque, N.M., where the series is set.

The Daytona 500 stop offers a ripe setting. The show targets 18- to-49-year-olds and has a male skew. About 60% of NASCAR fans fall in that age range, and about 60% are male.

Still, the "Super Bowl of NASCAR" can be a cluttered environment, with a host of promotional stunts surrounding the event. But Beyer, the vice president of activation and promotion, is undeterred.

"The great thing about a mobile tour is, 'Yes I have competition at a Daytona 500, but it's not as if people are seeing eight commercials back to back,'" she said. "I kind of have share of voice."

AMC, part of Rainbow Media, would not comment on how much it is spending on the effort. But the fuel costs alone on a 53-foot metallic mastodon going coast to coast might take up a full marketing budget at some networks. The truck AMC is using is one of several with a theater-on-the-go available for rent. Other entertainment companies have used them, too.

"Breaking Bad" has garnered multiple Emmy awards. Cranston won best actor in a drama series twice.