

10 Steps to Successful Advertising



By Brian Madigan LL.B.

1 Graphics Presentation

One of the first items you will require is a business card. Have it graphically designed with your company logo and your website address. Use this new graphic design for all of your advertising. Be consistent. Also, don't put your cell number on your business card.

2 Website

This will be the mainstay of your advertising campaign. Put this site on every piece of print material you can. Have the site produced professionally. Everyone will check it out. No one looks at the telephone book any more. The first thing new customers will ask: do you have a website? You don't want to say "no", it now looks like you're not serious about your new business.

3 Print Media

This is the "tried and true" method of advertising. The drawback is that it is temporary and expensive. However, the right brochures, flyers, newspapers, periodicals, and magazines can get your business off to a headstart. Afterwards, monitor success and new customer contacts to see what is working for you.

4 Blogs and Podcasting

This is the newest form of advertising on the market. It is inexpensive but time consuming. So, if you have the time, but not the money, then this is a sure fire way to promote your business. Blogs are written and published on the internet. Podcasts are voice messages published on the internet. Both are free! And, when you are starting up, that's important.

5 Calendars and Trinkets

People will keep calendars. They will often place them in a location of

prominence, on their desk, by the phone or on the fridge. If you are in the “take-out” food business, this can be great. It seems to work for some realtors. If you are a lawyer, it might detract from your professional image. Don’t waste your money on trinkets. They don’t last and really don’t compete with other forms of advertising. They are of little value and often end up in the hands of children. However, fridge magnets seem to work for some businesses.

6 Business Events and Trade Fairs

These can present excellent opportunities for you to advertise and grow your new business. Join a trade association and volunteer to be on the executive or one of the committees. The point is to get your name out there. Participate in trade fairs for your industry. If you can’t afford to be an exhibitor, at least attend them. Hand out your business cards directly to the people you want to do business with. And, don’t forget to follow up with them the next week.

7 Television and Radio

Television: expensive, very expensive! What can I say? This is a fine medium for the multinationals, but if you are a small business just starting out, you’ll spend your entire year’s budget in one week. Proceed cautiously down this road.

You may have success with radio advertising. It’s much cheaper, and works well for the opening day sales event if you have a retail store. This could be money well-spent.

8 Newsletters

If your business lends itself to some regularity of topical new issues in the “news”, then why not consider publishing a newsletter. You can circulate it by flyer, by e-mail or post it to your website. Assuming that it contains some worthwhile information, it will drive customers to your business. Publish regularly, but not monthly. Sometimes, every three weeks, sometimes every six weeks. That will depend upon your business.

9 Speaking Engagements

Speak to various groups about topics involving your expertise. This is an opportunity for you to get face time on television or airtime on radio without having to pay. And, by the time you can afford to pay for a late night half hour infomercial, you won’t need to listen to me.

10 Word of Mouth Promotions

This is the original form of advertising. There's a thousand years of history to show that it works. We are really back to that "hands-on", direct "face-to face" opportunity to market yourself. This will work better than any advertising campaign that you can come up with. So, interact with people. Make your customers and suppliers enjoy dealing with you. The best opportunity you have to do business tomorrow is with someone you did business with today. Satisfied customers will reward you with their future business and their referrals. This advertising costs you nothing other than a smile and a handshake.

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