

About Advertising

In this article: advertising is more than just taking out an ad; it is the image your business projects through ads as well as customer service.

The world of advertising is an interesting phenomenon in our society. It is everywhere in every possible media from newspapers to packaging to subtle product endorsements in a movie or television show. It is big business, big money... and necessary.

As consumers we are subjected to a daily bombardment of companies promoting their product with absolutely no assurance that there is any 'truth in advertising'. The result is a cynical populace that resists being 'sold' anything, which makes effective advertising a challenge, particularly for small entrepreneurs with a limited budget.

Meeting that challenge requires understanding that people need to be reminded in a variety of ways about the benefits of doing business with you. By definition advertising is anything and everything that makes a statement about your business. So it is not just the content in an ad that needs your attention, but how you or a staff member answers the phone or greets a customer as well as anything else that projects 'an image'.

Choosing the 'right' advertising really comes down to cost versus return, either in direct sales or building a solid customer base. For instance, a direct mail campaign is considered successful if one per cent of the recipients act on the flyer. So let's say it costs a total of \$1,000 to reach 1,000 households. To recoup your costs in direct sales the 10 households making up the one per cent would have to spend \$100 each with your company. BUT, there is more to consider than a dollar-for-dollar return. By getting each of those 10 households 'in the door' you have the opportunity to sell them on who you are as a company, and if you do that successfully, not only will those ten come again, but they will tell their friends who will tell their friends, all of which translates into an expanded customer base that generates sustained profits.

No matter what advertising medium is used it is consistency (branding) and repetition that will trigger recognition over time. Keep in mind that advertising is most effective when it is undertaken as one part of an overall marketing strategy (see Marketing is a Package). The other thing to know is that companies selling advertising space are most interested in selling the space and not what goes in it. They can and do provide advice on the design of the ad, but it is not their job to know or care whether or not the content represents your company in the best possible light; that's your job.

The options for where and how to spend an advertising budget are numerous. Making an informed decision requires expertise and experience. Business Management & Design.com can help you sort through the variables and come up with a plan to fit your budget and that works for your company.

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