

Evaluate and monitor your advertising

Checklist

- Does your headline have either a dominant illustration or a powerful headline to instantly telegraph your message and capture attention?
- Is your advertisement designed to reproduce well in newspapers?
- Have you created a distinctive and recognisable format for your advertisement?
- How do you sign your name, that is, have you a logo that is easy, recognisable etc?
- Is your advertisement well organised and easy to follow?
- Does your advertisement have a clean and uncluttered look?
- Should you make better use of white space?
- Does the main illustration demonstrate a benefit or show the merchandise in use?
- Is your main illustration big enough?
- Aim your headline at your prospects
- People do not buy products; they buy the benefits from those products. So don't promote the products but promote the benefits available to the consumer from the products.
- Write the body copy in terms of benefits and reinforce the message in your headline with more words in your body copy.
- Make sure that your copy is complete so that if a prospect wants to contact you for an order the copy contains all the information that he or she will want to know.
- Make sure you use simple and direct language with everyday words that are easily understood.
- Make sure your prices are clear and visible so that they are easy to find and easy to remember.
- Impress upon the prospect that action should be carried out immediately. Most sales people fail because they do not call for the order or close the sale.

Monitor results

During and after the promotion or campaign you need to measure and analyse just what has been achieved. You will need to calculate whether sales have increased, whether your business image has been improved, whether the marketing goals have been met and the feedback and reaction from customers. Some say that the effectiveness of any campaign is judged before you begin advertising and not after. They say that you should have met the goals that were set.

As the campaign is progressing, monitor each area and measure it up against the predetermined goals set. If necessary, make changes to suit the circumstances so that you are obtaining the maximum advantage from the funds that are being used. Some of the other ways that you can actually measure the success or otherwise are as follows:

- Surveys - ask people who visit or call their opinion of your products or services and your advertisement.
- Customer count - what numbers of customers are purchasing or enquiring?
- Orders - are orders increasing and has the campaign really made a difference?
- Contests - contests incorporated in the campaign are very effective.
- Coupons - coupons, which can be redeemed, are an excellent way of measuring success.
- Response cards - here customers are asked to respond to the promotion and at times a built-in reward such as a draw for a trip away is needed to.
- Ask people how they found out about the promotion to measure the best advertising method.



When advertising won't help

If you have a bad product or a poor service, then no amount of advertising will make you successful. If your business is poorly run and inefficient, with delays in supply and lack of following up queries, then advertising will not help. What happens is that a good advertising and promotion campaign will initially lure new customers who will buy but, because of incompetence or poor quality product or slack service, it is unlikely that those customers will return.

Some experts believe that nothing will kill a bad product or service like good advertising, because once your reputation for poor product or inferior service gets out, prospective customers will never return. Worse still, they will tell others and it will be costly to try and improve the situation. It is often said that it takes only one tenth of the cost to retain a satisfied customer, as compared to securing a new customer.

An advertising program will not turn around an inadequate marketing plan. If your product or service has no demand and is not wanted by the general public, then your cause is lost because no amount of advertising will create a demand. The key to success, therefore, is ensuring that you have a product or service that is needed by customers and, once they come to buy, make sure that your back-up service is A1 and that quality control of your products is maintained.

Final considerations

Advertising and promotion is a huge area. It is an area that requires specialist help if you are to be as effective as you would like. However, if you do not have a budget, then the keys have been outlined on how one can benefit at a reasonable cost (refer to related Fact Sheets listed below). You need to learn about the differences between the various advertising media, including the advantages and disadvantages, and the necessity and requirements of a proper plan to achieve good results from advertising.

If you do your own promotion, there is no shame in asking experienced people along the way for advice. In time you will become an expert in this area and, because advertising and promotion is such a critical factor in the success of a business, it may make the difference between surviving or becoming wealthy.

Where to go for help

In the same way that you would regularly seek help from your accountant and solicitor you should also obtain the services of someone with knowledge and experience in advertising. If you want professionals to handle your whole advertising effort from start to finish then you must seek an advertising agency or consultancy whose skills and charges suit your aims and budget.

An advertising agency provides a total advertising service to clients and they employ skilled people to help you plan your marketing strategy and to carry out those plans by producing ads, placing them in the proper media, and evaluating results for you.

If you want to plan and place your own advertising, talk to an art studio and media representatives about this. The art studio will, according to your instructions complete all the artwork and illustrations necessary for your advertisements whether for brochures, leaflets, posters, letterheads or newspaper and magazine ads. The media representative will advise on layout, size, placing etc. It is also important to ensure you own any artwork designed by others (intellectual property).



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Further information

The following fact sheets provide further information on these issues:

- Advertising – introduction
- Marketing plan