

Flyers are probably the least expensive way to inform the public about a business. They can be used to announce special sales, special events, new products, discounts, to provide coupons, or just to create a visible presence for the company.

Brochures, flyers, and handouts, which can come in a variety of shapes and styles, should fit in a file drawer for easy access. They should be produced on good, quality paper, use color (as least two) and feature a unified type style. The copy should be crisp, clean, clear, and to the point.

Another form of advertising that cuts across most types of businesses and advertising barriers is direct response mail. While it is not essential to every business, it does play an important role in a lot of different industries and, therefore, deserves a mention here.

Direct Response Mail

People receive a lot of mail advertisements. In most cases they speak to some specific interest that the individual has. For example, if the person typically subscribes to a cooking magazine, they will more than likely receive direct mailings promoting cook books, utensils, and specialty foods. If they purchase a sweater by mail, they will probably receive scores of clothing catalogues. This happens because mail-order businesses sell their mailing lists to other similar businesses or to marketing agencies. These lists are frequently generated by a consumer activity and they represent a market-specific advertising medium. Direct mail can be a powerful tool when the right list is combined with the right product or service.

Most mailings include a letter composed in a personal style. With computer printing, the recipient's name can be included in the text of the letter. Although the product or service is explained in the letter, the "clincher" for the sale will actually be found in the promotional materials that accompany the letter: A colorful brochure and mail-back card. The design for the "mail-back" is very important. Sometimes it is in the form of a questionnaire. Often it will have a post block where a custom-made stamp or enclosed token may be placed. The psychology underlying the inclusion of a questionnaire, a stamp,

or token is to encourage customer involvement. If a business can motivate the recipient to participate by completing a survey, putting a stamp on a square, or inserting a token into a slot, then they will have a much higher rate of return on your mail-out

Printing RUSH or URGENT or DATED MATERIAL on the outside of the envelope of a direct mailing conveys to the recipient a sense of urgency in the requested reply. A prepaid return envelope will also help speed things along as well.

Direct mailing is expensive because of the large number of mail outs required. Even the best planned mailings usually generate only 3% response so you should carefully evaluate the expected return on any direct mail campaign that you might be considering. Allocating funds to other media exposure may prove more advantageous.

There are a couple of other marketing and advertising strategies which are extremely key: Promotion and Public Relations (PR).

Promotions

Promotions require planning and hard work. Like any kind of marketing or advertising, the more thoroughly a business outlines the objectives and defines the target audience the better the promotion.

The immediate objective of any promotion, according to the Sales Promotion Executive Association, is to increase "the flow of goods and services from the manufacturer to the final sale."

Promotions are used for:

- 1) Special events
- 2) Building store traffic
- 3) Developing business leads
- 4) Promoting image and goodwill
- 5) Introducing new products and services
- 6) Opening doors for sales people

Special occasions are good opportunities for promotions. Companies often use promotions to celebrate anniversaries, to attract people to open houses, or to stage grand openings. Seasonal promotions, such as spring fashion or autumn harvest festivals are a very effective. Christmas is, of course, the biggest seasonal promotion time of the year; but creative promotions can be staged at any time of the year.

Contests, sweepstakes, premium offers, and price incentives are sometimes called "forcing mechanisms" or "trial inducers." They are intended to induce quick action on the part of the consumer and are all effective sales promotion tools.

Sales promotions are especially effective when combined with an advertising campaign designed to support dealers and/or retailers. This package might include:

- 1) Advertising to dealers
- 2) Advertising to the consumer
- 3) Point of purchase displays
- 4) Guest appearances
- 5) Demonstration of product
- 6) Special exhibitions
- 7) Consultants

Some small businesses may not be able to put together an elaborate promotional package. Nevertheless, by using imagination and knowledge of the business, they can integrate as many marketing factors into a promotion campaign as possible.

Public Relations

The primary purpose of public relations is to generate knowledge, understanding, confidence, and goodwill. When done effectively, a good public relations plan helps to ensure a good balance between the interests of the company, the community,

Once the proposed image picture is clear, then it is time to look at the materials that will be used to propagate the image. Brochures, flyers, and other handouts are important parts of any image package. However, brochures, flyers, circulars, and the like are often times treated as throwaways. That is, they do not get read before they are trashed. To minimize this waste of money and effort, business must make these items eye-catching. In addition, it is important not to ignore what advertising agencies call "white space;" an empty area that gives the eye time to rest and helps to emphasize important copy.

Effective brochures and flyers are designed to elicit one of several actions:

- 1) An order;
- 2) A request for more information;
- 3) A call for an appointment; or
- 4) Receptivity to future contact.

Each flyer or brochure should have only one idea. There are ways to accomplish this:

- 1) Tell people how you will solve their problem.
- 2) Focus on benefits of your product/service; not features.
- 3) Make people an offer they can't refuse.
- 4) Show that others value your product or service.

While having a brochure or flyer will not guarantee that a business will make a sale, not having a brochure or flyer that summarizes exactly what potential clients are looking for, just might lose them one. Brochures, in particular, are an important part of any business. They convey the business's image and sales message and represent the company when no human representative is present. They keep the business in the mind of the potential client. Therefore, brochures are not the place to skimp on advertising money. They should always be done in a professional manner by a good graphic artist and copy writer; not a printer. Too many businesses try to save money or brochures by writing the pieces themselves and having them quick printed. This is simply a waste of money. They will serve no beneficial purpose. In the long run, ineffective brochures will actually cost the business money in terms of lost clientele. **People do not want to do business with a company that promotes itself with a cheap or unprofessional brochure.**

The best education of a consumer is achieved by combining print and processed media. It will also be helpful to study competition to determine their timing strategies and media buys. Their choices can be great guides for media planning.

The choice of media should be based on several factors:

- 1) The advertising sources most likely to be seen or heard by the target audience(s)
- 2) Information obtained through media kits from each media possibility identified
- 3) The "right" impact and price tag for the budget and
- 4) Timing

One form of advertising cuts across all businesses and all barriers:

Word-of-Mouth Advertising

Word-of-mouth advertising is the most important part of any advertising mix and it should be used at all times; even when media is not employed. This is where a business's image package comes into play. It helps generate word-of-mouth. The trick is to make sure the word-of-mouth generated is positive. Therefore, an image package must be carefully designed and created to focus on the most positive aspects of the business in question. Attention must be given to the "type" of image the business wants to project (e.g., high tech and progressive, steadfast and loyal, creative and fun, etc.) Everything that is used in the development of the image package should equate to that proposed image. That includes everything from logo to logotype to colors, etc. If each piece of the package design is not coordinated, it will likely send a negative message that the business doesn't have a clear picture of itself.

and society-at-large. It can help to enhance the reputation of a company and/or its products and services in the eyes of the general public.

To be effective, however, public relations must coincide with established marketing and advertising goals and objectives. Public relations has many components that, together, make it a working piece of the marketing and advertising puzzle.

Publicity

Publicity is part of public relations. Newspapers and magazines are always looking for good copy. Interesting ideas or business-related stories can essentially obtain free advertising. Stories must relate to subjects in which editors believe their readers are interested; an unusual or exciting hobby of an employee; or a business's involvement in a civic or charitable activity.

A spectacular example of publicity involved AT&T's headquarters building in New York. Normally the building of a new corporate office is briefly noted in newspapers and magazines and, then dropped until the opening. However, AT&T chose Phillip Johnson, a world famous architect, to design the building. Johnson decided to put an elaborate scrolled roof on the structure, breaking with the postwar tradition of flat-roofed skyscrapers. As a result, coverage of the new building generated a great amount of publicity for AT&T.

Most small businesses, at one time or another, have an opportunity to generate publicity within the context of the community or neighborhood where they are located. To explore as many opportunities as possible, it is important that business get to know the outside interests and accomplishments of its employees. Additionally, they should encourage employees to get involved in civic affairs. The business itself can sponsor little league or youth soccer groups, underwrite prizes for school contests, or participate in local charity fund-raising activities. All of these represent excellent opportunities for obtaining publicity for the business.

Press Releases

The basic tool of publicity is the press release. A well-done press release is essentially a brief article designed to stimulate media coverage. Great care needs to be taken in the development of a press release. It should be brief and to the point. A short, interesting release can always be expanded by an interested editor.

A standard press release should contain:

- 1) Name and address of the company
- 2) Contact person
- 3) Headline or one-line description of the event
- 4) Text describing who, what, when, where, why, and how

Below is a list of the top 10 topics that interest editors:

- 1) Tie-ins with the news of the day
- 2) Staging an event
- 3) Providing the community with useful information
- 4) Forming a committee to solve a problem
- 5) Giving away an award or scholarship
- 6) Making a prediction about something
- 7) Celebrating a grand opening or an anniversary
- 8) Doing something incredible or special
- 9) Giving away food
- 10) Any type of success story, especially overcoming hardship

Business should not worry about writing style. If the newspaper or broadcast station is interested in the release, they will put it in their standard format. However, it is important to find out who is responsible for the coverage of the particular type of event represented by the release. The announcement should be sent directly to that individual. Personalizing is as important in public relations as it is in sales.

A press release must be timely, news worthy, and when possible it should involve people rather than things. If possible, photographs should be included, but make certain that they are in the format used by the agency in question.

is treated as if he or she is special, (s)he will automatically know that (s)he will be offered the same care in buying whatever is being sold. Confidence in the business will be increased because it has been established as special by recognizing the customer that way. That's an effective marketing message if ever there was one.

The next step in the process is to determine the specific advertising strategy. Developing a creative strategy is like working a jigsaw puzzle. The creative strategy will ultimately decide how the advertising plan will work. To create a strategy, it is necessary to answer these questions:

- 1) What should be accomplished with advertising?
- 2) In what stage (e.g., new, growth, maturity, or decline) is the product or service being advertised?
- 3) What creative objectives (e.g., to change the store image; to support a special promotion; to increase store traffic; etc.) have been identified?
- 4) What set of "appeals" (e.g., security, fear, esteem, sensory, etc.) will be used?

Once all of the advertising plan questions have been answered, you can choose the media placement for the ad. These include:

- 1) Print
- 2) Television
- 3) Radio
- 4) Outdoor billboards, transit signs, etc.
- 5) Word of Mouth
- 5) Direct response mail
- 8) Electronic
- 8) Specialty

It is important that you not limit advertising to any single media type. Use secondary media to increase reach, maintain frequency, and stimulate different processing of product or service information.

accepted by consumers and other businesses. These include, but certainly are not limited to, the following:

Typical Consumer Needs:

Protect health	Satisfy an appetite
Reduce fat	Have beautiful possessions
Improve appearance	Attract the opposite sex
Get ahead in business	Be an individual
Make money	Emulate others
Save money	Use opportunities
Win money	Avoid criticism
Cash in on bargains	Keep possessions
Gain social advancement	Avoid physical pain
Win friends	Avoid loss of reputation
Influence people	Avoid loss of money
Win praise/compliments	Avoid trouble
Gain prestige	Avoid discomfort
Be a leader	Enjoy comfort
Enjoy leisure	Have a happy marriage
Care for children	Attain security in old age
Improve education	Save time
Be creative	Enjoy pleasure
Avoid worry	Be clean
Avoid drudgery	Be in style
Avoid embarrassment	Satisfy curiosity

Typical Business Needs:

Increase profits	Avoid money loss
Reduce expenses	Avoid time wastage
Reduce bad debts/losses	Avoid losing good people
Attract new customers	Avoid losing assets
Build good will	Avoid legal problems
Be respected by peers	Avoid loss of customers
Save time	Have attractive facilities
Improve staff morale	Be a community leader
Be respected by superiors	Use opportunities

One of the most important human needs is identity. It is, therefore, an outstanding public relations tool to recognize the customer not only as a human being but as an individual such as "Wesley Firman," an avid hunter. Mention a customer's interests whenever possible. Find out more about them. When a customer

Public Service Announcement

A public service announcement is a short piece (usually 10 to 30 seconds) written in script form for radio or TV use. NOTE: It is much more likely to be used on radio than on TV and it is almost impossible to place unless it is used for a nonprofit organization or is related to an event held for a nonprofit organization or cause.

The PSA, as it is called, should be sent to stations in the vicinity of the organization. Some PSA's are tied to a specific event. Others, designed to merely promote awareness, are used anytime.

At the top of a PSA is a "kill date," or date to stop using the piece. For an announcement that may not have a time limit, "none" can be listed as the kill date.

Although PSA's can be written in a variety of lengths, 10-second and 30-second versions are most common. Therefore, send two versions (one 10-second; one 30-second). The PSA language should be easily readable, contain a contact name or phone number, and emphasize the date of the event or deadline dates if they are applicable.

Press Kit

A press kit is used whenever a business needs to send out more information than is covered in a press release or when the media requests more information from the business. It is an extension of the company's image. It, therefore, should be extremely professional in nature.

Information contained in a press kit generally includes an outline of key employees, the products and/or services provided by the company, and other information that is pertinent or interesting. It may even include testimonial letters from satisfied customers.

Such kits generally contain:

- 1) Brochures
- 2) Coupons
- 3) Photographs
- 4) Newsletters
- 5) Much more

Press kit information should be clear, concise, and brief. A cover letter should be included. Its purpose is to entice the reader to continue reading the kit.

Now it is time to **develop a formal advertising calendar**. This is an excellent tool for monitoring ad expenditures. The twelve-month calendar lists the marketing activities in which the company will be engaging each week of the year. The calendar should have 52 rows; one for each week. It should also have five columns for the following:

- 1) Week number
- 2) Thrust of the marketing that week (e.g., sale, special offer, new merchandise, focus on service etc.)
- 3) Which marketing/advertising weapons you will use that week.
- 4) Money invested in marketing & advertising that week.
- 5) Rates on a one to ten scale, as to traffic, sales, and profits

Using the calendar will provide a business with a good mechanism for planning marketing and advertising for the following year because it can eliminate the tactics that resulted in poor weeks and stress the tactics that resulted in excellent weeks.

Finally, it is time to **decide how much to spend on advertising**. There are three common techniques used for this purpose.

1) Percentage of Gross Sales Technique

Using this technique, allocate a set percentage of sales. The best way to do this is to monitor sales over a period of years and to adjust the percentage spent on advertising based on sales trends. A variation on this method is to assign a fixed amount per unit of sales to advertising, linking the advertising budget to production figures instead of sales.

2) The Parity Technique

Another budgeting method recognizes the effect of competitor advertising. The parity method matches the competitor's budget, dollar for dollar. For example, if the business in question holds 12% of the market (with a budget of \$8,000 per year) and a competitor holds a 15% share (with a budget of \$10,000 per year), the business should raise their budget to \$10,000.

Let's take this idea a step further. When a customer buys a product or service from a business, what are they really buying: The product, the service, the business, or something else? The answer most often is a combination of all those things and a few more. They are buying the:

- 1) Owner's personality
- 2) Employees with whom they come in contact
- 3) Business's reputation
- 4) Store or office decor
- 5) Aroma of the business
- 6) Status that the product or service offers them
- 7) Professionalism of the business
- 8) Acceptance of the community
- 9) Service

Business is not really just selling a product or a service. Business is selling a "feeling." And the identification of exactly what that feeling is, begins the development of any good advertising concept.

Once a solid marketing plan is in place and the target audience has been determined, then it is time to **establish advertising goals and objectives**. Typically advertising objectives should accomplish at least one of the following:

- 1) Sell a certain amount of product or service within an established period of time
- 2) Position a product or service within the market
- 3) Educate the consumer about a particular product or service
- 4) Change or improve the image of a product, service or company
- 5) Gain a specific number of responses in the form of business replies, new customers, telephone calls, etc.

The next step in the process is to **determine the marketing message**. Strong advertising is based on a clearly defined message, even though the "style" of the message may vary from one market segment to another. This is where the "feeling" that the consumer wants or needs comes into play. It helps to define the marketing message by taking advantage of the set of advertising "appeals that exist and are readily

The good news is that one flaw, unless it is a major one, isn't going to kill the chances of good communication between you and your customers. However, a major flaw can kill those chances if it projects an overall image as cold, unyielding, weak, passive, distant, etc.

Once your own communication skills are perfected so they can be used as an effective advertising tool, then it is time to look at other advertising opportunities. It is, however, best to begin by exploring some rather disturbing "advertising myths." These myths are extremely common, but they are also VERY WRONG!

- 1) I don't need to advertise: The product/service will sell itself.
- 2) If I advertise enough, I will be successful.
- 3) Advertising increases the cost of a product.
- 4) Advertising forces people to buy something they don't want.
- 5) I can always trust my advertising salesperson.
- 6) My business is so small I can't afford to advertise.
- 7) People don't read ads.
- 8) I have nothing to advertise.
- 9) It isn't the right time of year for advertising.
- 10) Everybody knows my store and what I carry.
- 11) Everybody knows where we are.
- 12) I don't know how to create an ad.
- 13) I didn't get any results from my last ad.
- 14) I can't get position in the newspaper.
- 15) I don't have to keep up with my competition.

Before looking at advertising opportunities, it is important to remember that often the consumer's concept of what they are buying and the business person's concept of what they are selling are not the same thing. In order to advertise effectively, business must get on the same wave length as their customer. Perhaps this idea is best illustrated by some examples. Here are some common products and examples of how the consumer views them. In other words, what the customer thinks they are really buying:

Product	What the Consumer "Thinks" They're Buying
Clothing	Neat appearance, style, comfort, attractiveness
Shoes	Comfort, good look, walking on air
Furniture	Comfort, cleanliness, style, contentment
Books	Entertainment, knowledge, relaxation

3) The Objective and Task Technique

Simply stated, through this method objectives are set for media usage, the costs of reaching media objectives are estimated, and production costs are estimated. The sum of these costs equals the ad budget. This method specifically considers media costs in setting the budget. In order for this method to be effective, expert media assistance is needed. Furthermore, since it is very easy to over spend on media costs with this method, alternative methods may be better for new business owners.

As with everything, there are some common mistakes with advertising that should be avoided. We have identified twelve:

- 1) Budgeting before you have set your objectives.
- 2) An advertising message that's not noteworthy.
- 3) Letting art prevail over the message.
- 4) An advertising message that is not important to buyer.
- 5) Advertising that is too late with too little.
- 6) You were "threatened" into advertising.
- 7) Your media choices don't hit your target market.
- 8) The product or service life cycle was not considered.
- 9) Advertising not synchronized with the sales program.
- 10) There is no formal evaluation procedures or budget.
- 11) There are no measurable goals for your ad program.
- 12) The product or service was not properly positioned.

In summary, let's review the highlights of this pamphlet:

- 1) Be your business's best advertising tool
- 2) Know what the customer thinks (s)he is buying (the "feeling") versus what you are selling
- 3) Establish advertising goals and objectives
- 4) Determine your marketing message
- 5) Determine the right advertising strategies to accomplish your goals and objectives
- 6) Choose the right media placement and mix
- 7) Take advantage of all public relations opportunities (e.g., publicity, press releases, and public service announcements)

- 8) Develop a formal advertising calendar
- 9) Decide how much to spend on advertising

And most of all, remember that you can call on OSBDC or SCORE at any time. Consultants will be glad to help with any marketing and advertising needs.

Power colors for men are charcoal gray, navy blue, black, and deep brown. Bright colors worn either by men or women tend to make people uncertain, nervous, or put off. Pastel colors, while putting people more at ease, tend to be extremely laid back; which may make the sale more difficult.

Things like beards, mustaches, makeup, hair cuts, and even accessories like sunglasses, jewelry, and ties, can also have a profound impact; as can nose or ear hair, body odor, too much cologne, circles under the eyes, bad breath, etc.

- 3) **Visual/Stance Cues** (what a person sees looking at you and your body language);

Example, crossing arms stiffly over the chest is considered a "closed" stance, indicating there is no room for another person or object. Arms held in a curved position indicates strong boundaries with a defined opening that says "come in." Leg stance, open or closed, indicates much the same thing. If legs are open and arms are closed, that indicates incongruity. People are not likely to buy from someone who projects that kind of uncertain image.

- 4) **Eye Contact** (whether or not you look at the person you are talking to;

Example, looking at someone when they are talking to them says you are interested. It also indicates you believe in what you are saying and in yourself. Looking away when someone is talking indicates distraction and disinterest. Looking down or away when you are talking to someone indicates you don't believe in what you are saying or in yourself, or that you are lying.

- 5) **Voice** (your tone and volume);

Example, speaking too loudly makes you appear to be pushy while speaking softly indicates a lack of belief in what you are saying or in yourself. Speaking too slowly insults the individual you're talking to, by indicating they are slow or stupid; speaking too fast indicates you are unsure of what you're saying.

- 6) **Handshake** (the contact you make with another);

Example, a limp or brusque handshake indicates disinterest while a crushing handshake indicates an intent to overpower. A wet handshake indicates nervousness, uncertainty of what you're about to say. A firm handshake indicates confidence.

One of the keys to success in advertising is YOU - - the business owner - - the most important advertising tool the business possesses. The way a business is communicated to others is an important part of any advertising plan. And yet few business owners think about the importance of their own communication capabilities.

In order to sell a product or service, you should begin by making yourself aware of:

- 1) Who you are
- 2) How you want to come across to others
- 3) What others currently say or feel about you
- 4) How you can best respond to those thoughts and feelings

Miscommunication between a business and its customers could result in poor sales volume. Still, it happens every day. As a rule, miscommunication is generally caused by a series of things:

1) **Selective Perception:**

Example, a fifty-two year old male who travels the same road every day, fails to "see" a billboard advertising a popular children's water park (although it has been along that pathway for months). Why? Selective perception allows individuals to acknowledge only those items with which they have immediate need or involvement. A fifty-two year old male - - with no children or grandchildren at home - - has no need for a children's activity. Therefore, his mind screens out the billboard: He, in fact, probably does not notice it at all.

2) **Dress** (how you look and what image you project);

Example, women project a stronger, more powerful image if they wear a suit (jacket and skirt or jacket, blouse, and skirt) rather than a pant set, dress, etc.. They project a laid-back, casual image when they wear pants, a skirt and blouse, or a dress. Women are also expected to have a broader wardrobe than men. Men, can get by with only four to five major wardrobe changes. In rural areas, men can just as easily project a strong, powerful image with a sports coat, slacks, and tie as with suit and tie. A much more casual image is projected when they wear just a button shirt, tie, and slacks.

Color also comes into play in dress. Power colors for women are blue (from royal to navy), charcoal gray, black, purple and red.

The Northwest Oklahoma SBDC, located in Alva at NWOSU - - with satellite offices at the Enid NWOSU campus and in Guymon - - covers a large portion of Northwest Oklahoma.

OSBDC Regional Office
Northwestern Oklahoma State University
Alva, Oklahoma 73717
(580) 327-8608
Bill Gregory, Regional Director
bwgregory@nwsu.edu
Jeanne Cole, Business Development Specialist
jmcole@nwsu.edu

OSBDC/SCORE Satellite Office
Northwestern Oklahoma State University
2929 E. Randolph,
Enid, Oklahoma 73701
(580) 213-3197
Melissa Cole, Business Development Specialist
Bob Wilcox, SCORE Chairman
mcole@nwsu.edu

OSBDC Satellite Office
118 NW 4th St.
Guymon, Oklahoma 73942
(580) 338-4357
Mark Aubrey, Business Development Specialist
osbdc@opsu.edu

Advertising 101

A great deal of confusion still exists over the differences between the terms "marketing" and "advertising." Some businesses mistakenly consider the two interchangeable. In truth, they are not! While marketing is the activity intended to create an interest in and a need to purchase a certain product or service, advertising is simply one of the many technical tools used in marketing to accomplish that task. Other such tools include things like public relations, publicity, promotion and many other tools.

Advertising is a complex business because it includes all of the means and methods of communication necessary to present a product or service in the marketplace. The ultimate purpose of advertising is to communicate effectively with a target market in order to maximize business profits. This is achieved by building an appropriate image, gaining public acceptance, and then selling the product or service.

Marketing without advertising is like a printer without ink. There may be something to sell, but there is no mechanism to help translate the value and worth of that "something" to the general public. The end result will be much smaller sales. By the same respect, advertising without a marketing plan is a sure fire way to throw away money. Only when marketing and advertising are used hand-in-hand can a business create a solid mechanism for selling a product or service.



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