



Not Advertising Your Business is like Posting a Billboard in your Basement.

If you build it will they come?

Your small business most likely began with referrals. Your satisfied clients told their friends and their friends told their friends and a solid client base and reputation was built. As your company continues to serve existing customers you may recognize pivotal times where it becomes important to develop an advertising plan. Some identifiable factors are: when business profits are down (especially in a slow economy); there is a desire or need to grow; a new product or service is launched; competitors are growing too fast for comfort; competitors names are better known; customers have a misperception of product or service.

If any of these factors are a consideration with your company, careful planning is important. Are you going to jump right in and pick up a superbowl ad? Or is it better to reach your clients with periodical postcard mailings? It can be a daunting task to determine which media is best suited for your company, what your budget should be, how frequently ads should run, what to include in your ads.

To answer these questions the first step is to determine your target audience. Each media has a core audience. For instance, if you are reaching teenagers, the best media is radio and internet. Media choice also depends on the product or service you are selling. If you are an employment agency you will get the most bang for your buck by running classified ads consistently. You may also choose to include a display ad to help build name recognition.

Once your target and your media is chosen you need to have a concept developed. Your message should be relevant to your audience, tell who you are, what your product or service is, how they can reach you, where you are located and why you are their best choice. Clear, concise copy and eye-catching graphics that capture your audiences attention right then and there will move a prospect or client to action.

I have heard it said that if most of your new customers are coming in from word of mouth, then you are not marketing enough!

Important Points to Pay Attention to:

- product
- pricing
- promotion
- positioning
- publicity
- packaging
- pass along
- permission



Always search for new ways to put your message in front of your audience and potential clients – be bold and innovative!

**Good advertising is that which moves
a prospect or client to action.
Make a connection.**

1. Know as much about your audience as possible before writing or designing anything. It is easy to lose sight in your day-to-day management of your business.
2. Advertising is about selling. Generate interest in your product or service.
3. Hire a designer or agency to create your ads. Be an expert at what you do best. Even though there are many computer applications available that allow you to develop ads do you really have the time to keep up-to-date on all of the latest trends and software? The money you save on design fees is nominal compared with what running a bad ad costs you.
4. Speak clearly and concisely in your ad copy. Make your ads feel personal. Work with a copywriter to create wording for your ad.
5. Don't go overboard with graphics. Graphics should be eye-catching and draw people in, not overwhelm it.
6. Take the time to write a strong headline. Beware of overused words and any humor that may be offensive to your audience.
7. Pick one message and stick with it. Ads that try to be all things to all people end up failing to reach anyone.
8. Follow the 40-40-20 rule. Media leader findings of successful ads is 40% depends on offering the right product, 40% depends on the right audience contact and 20% is creative.