

## Marketing Ideas You May Not Have Considered

It has been reported that Americans are subjected to more than 3,000 advertising pitches or messages per day. When we consider classic advertising, we usually think of conventional media in the form of print ads, direct mail pieces, billboards (and other outdoor media options), radio and TV spots, and web advertising. Innovative advertisers have come up with numerous other ways to make an impression and, like it or not, some of these more unconventional options are influencing your buying habits as much as conventional advertising.

### **Word-of-Mouth Advertising**

Some marketing firms offer W-O-M advertising *exclusively*, but their methodology isn't ideal for every product or service. It's labor intensive and expensive. Remember the book and movie, "Coal Miner's Daughter?" In her early career as a singer/songwriter, Loretta Lynn and her husband, Doolittle, hit the road to pitch her records to DJs, one-by-one. When the buzz began, things began to happen quickly, and soon the country singer's name was a household word. Word-of-mouth is especially effective in selling products like video games and self-published books where user loyalty runs high.

### **Credibility Advertising**

Suppose you're a savvy entrepreneur with a successful business and plenty to share. You can build your company's credibility (and your own) by positioning yourself as an expert in your field. One way to do this is by writing and publishing a book that presents your personal business philosophy, success tips, dos & don'ts and other sound advice. Once your books are published, don't sell them, *give* them away by the dozens... to friends, clients, colleagues and anyone else even remotely interested in your business. If you are fearful of giving away trade secrets to your competitors, think again. By empowering others to become successful too, you empower yourself. It's a universal spiritual law that works for everyone.

### **Annual Report**

Your company's annual report can become a powerful marketing tool that imparts, in a compelling, highly-credible way, the story of your company's history, its growth, its community involvement, its core values, and its future plans. No longer just a boring, fact-filled report for the eyes of stakeholders, an annual report -- if it's a well-written and well designed -- is a brochure PLUS. So after your annual meeting is over, make copies of your annual report available to others.

### **Sound Bytes**

This tip is easily forgotten, but it has great power: you can effectively brand your product or service with a memorable jingle or acoustic signal. Just the right sound, just the right

rhythm, sets the mood for your message and resonates long after a spot is aired on radio or TV, your on-hold telephone messaging system, or on your website.

### **Town Crier Method**

This one is just too bizarre to exclude, even though it's legitimate. There's a guy in NYC who is actually paid by businesses to stand around various populated areas of the city and shout out their brand names every 15 minutes for a week. Although this speaks to a limited, untargeted audience, it "speaks volumes" by being memorable and because it captures media attention. The top-of-mind awareness factor cannot be dismissed, either.

### **General Ambient Advertising**

Promo messages on everyday items like gas pumps, elevators, shopping carts, mall kiosks and even toilet seats have been around for awhile now, and we're continually surprised at where they'll turn up next. Ambient advertising works subliminally to reinforce other messages we're exposed to.

### **"Smart" Ads**

How many ways can your privacy be invaded? "Smart" ads are highly-targeted messages like static ads, video clips or coupons showing up on personal techno items like your i-pod, GPS, digital camera, or cell phone. They cater to a user's personal tastes, using the behavioral patterns of specific gadget buyers to track these tastes.

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