

Making Waves with Small Budget Advertising

Ten Rules for Successful Advertising

- 1. Stay Focused:** Keep your advertisements quick to read and easy to remember. Focus on a single message for each advertising campaign. Highlight only price, benefit, selection, quality, service, cause, or incentive. Use a strong attention-grabbing headline and only graphics and wording that support that headline.
- 2. Establish Credibility:** Back up any claims with valid proof in the form of statistics, testimonials, images or qualifications to give your ad credibility. Make your offer risk-free by providing a free trial or money-back guarantee.
- 3. Test First:** Before you blow your entire budget on a massive advertising campaign, try it out on a small group first. Take note of the results and reactions to your headline, content, offer, etc. Track the use of coupons or codes and web or store traffic. If the response is good, try it on a larger audience. If not, revise some elements and try again on another small group.
- 4. Aim Accurately:** There is no point in wasting your limited advertising dollars attempting to speak to everyone. People who won't or can't buy your products or support your cause are not your prospects. Take the time to determine exactly who your ideal clients are. Define them by location, age, level of education, gender, lifestyle, hobbies, interests, habits, income, etc.
- 5. Speak Their Language:** Script your message to show that you understand their specific situation, needs or desires and that your product, service or cause is a perfect fit for them. Answer their questions: What's in it for me? Why should I care? Present the benefits you offer. Explain how you can improve their lives, business, finances, home, etc. Put yourself in their shoes and determine what would make you respond.
- 6. Add a Sense of Wonder:** Because advertisements rarely sell a product or service, your message should work to create interest and make your prospects want to seek more information. Give them a reason to call, visit or click for the information they desire.
- 7. Give Specific Instructions:** Make it easy for prospects to take the next step. Tell them how to order, who to call, where to visit. Add a sense of urgency by presenting a time limit on a special offer or a deadline to get them to act immediately.
- 8. Design Effectively:** Utilize professional design to create advertisements that work to attract your prospects attention and deliver your message in an effective manner. Both the look of the ad and the tone of the message should reflect the image you want for your business or organization. Always include your business name and logo for consistency.
- 9. Place Properly:** Place your advertising message where your prospects are most likely to see or hear it. Mix and match media and be repetitive to reach more prospects successfully. Newspapers, the web and radio all offer affordable advertising options. Trade publications are best for targeting a specific audience.
- 10. Test Your Efforts:** Track your responses and sales to determine the success of your advertising message. Ask new customers where they heard about you and what convinced them to respond. Keep what works and change what doesn't.