

How to Create Ads that Pull on a Limited Budget

by Carol Dunitz, Ph.D.

You don't have to have big bucks to get hefty results. You do need to invest your advertising dollars wisely. That means using smaller ads and placing them with precision.

Concentrate Your Efforts. Advertising on a shoestring requires lots of creativity. Figure out what publication your potential clients or customers are most likely to read. Run your ads there. Don't dilute the effectiveness of your campaign by haphazardly running ads in many places.

Repetition. Repetition. Repetition. Your ad should appear regularly. It is not enough to run it once, or merely run it from time to time. Commit to a steady schedule. It will pay off.

Hurry. Hurry. Step Right Up. Pay careful attention to your headline. A headline gives news, suggests benefits or piques curiosity. Put your thinking cap on and start brainstorming! **DO NOT USE THE NAME OF YOUR COMPANY AS A HEADLINE.** It works in tandem with your headline even though it is generally at the bottom of your ad.

Commanding Headlines. A great headline will capture your audience's attention when it is set in a typeface that is easy-to-read. A slightly unusual, bold typeface works well because it catches your reader's eyes.

Make Them An Offer They Can't Refuse. Do you have something special you can offer? Consider using the offer as a "hook" in your copy. It may help you get higher response.

Cut. Trim. Reduce. We live in an age when people appreciate brevity. Make sure your copy is concise and to the point. You don't have much space and your prospects don't have much time.

Razzle-Dazzle 'Em. Use eye-appealing graphics. Color is terrific, but adds substantially to cost. If your budget is limited, do not let a ad rep sell you on color. Find a way to make your ads stand out without extra color. It can be done.

An Addendum. Send reprints of your ads to prospects. Preface the ad with the magic words: "As Seen In". It will make a positive impression on those who see it. While it's not actually PR, it may still be perceived as a third party "endorsement."

Developing great small ads is a challenge. Meet it. Address it. Conquer it. You can get big results from small ads.

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