

How to Wage Winning Advertising and PR Campaigns

by Carol Dunitz, Ph.D.

You *can* maximize the effectiveness of your marketing campaigns learning what the pros already know and applying it to your advertising and PR. Know who your target audience is, do your research to understand how to reach it, and then deliver a message that can't be refused.

Maximize Advertising Effectiveness. Unless you are selling something like toothpaste you do not need to reach everyone. Concentrate your efforts and focus on the people who are most likely to be interested in what you have to sell or say. Brainstorm for great headlines that capture readers' or listeners' attention and ensure continued attention. If you are dealing with print, work with easy-to-read typefaces. Use eye-appealing graphics, engaging jingles, and production techniques that draw interest. Be as concise as possible. And make an offer that can't be refused.

Capitalize on PR. Consult a text for proper press release format. You don't want to look like an amateur. PR is all about making something that is important to you look like news to the media. Editors want to use information that will be of interest to their readers. Will your news be of interest? Does it have a local slant? Can it help readers improve the quality of their lives? Find a hook that can't be resisted. Then state your information in a new and fresh way.

The media wants your information. Most of what it publishes in print, online, or on radio or TV has been submitted by PR professionals or people not involved in the industry. Reporters have needs and you can help satisfy them. Consider consulting editorial calendars to time your stories with their needs. Also consider building relationships with journalists to facilitate receptivity and inclusion of your materials.

Transform Ideas into Messages that Sell. Know your product or service inside and out. Attempt to know your customer as well as you know yourself. Understand wants and needs and then stress what benefits you can confer with your service or product. Be creative and meaningfully differentiate yourself from the competition with copy that speaks to your audience in a compelling fashion.

Get Your Target Audience to Take Notice. Entice with engaging headlines and draw prospects in with snappy visuals. Use attractive and consistent production or design work to dress up your message. But never forget that all the bells and whistles in the world cannot replace a forceful message.

Develop Powerful Writing Skills. Writing well is not easy. You may have to go through a number of revisions but you can do it. Don't rely simply on your own response to what you have written. Consult others whose opinion you respect. Express ideas simply and avoid being abstract. A conversational tone draws people in and the use of shorter sentences and words as

well as action verbs will give your copy more bounce. Show genuine sincerity and concern in your writing. People like to know that you care.

Use an Integrated Marketing Approach. Computers have added a new dimension to marketing. They allow you to more carefully analyze your customer base putting you in a position to integrate marketing and sales. You can more effectively target your messages to achieve better results. Periodically assess the effectiveness of your marketing, being sure to constantly update your database so your information remains fresh. Use multiple tactics to get the word out. Some people may be more likely to respond to print while others may be drawn to online communications.

Make Your Website Work for You. Avoid the temptation to put your brochure online. Develop a snappy home page that's easy to navigate with fresh new information on a regular basis. Provide useful links. And be sure to take advantage of the web's 'way cool' potential.

You *can* develop a marketing campaign to promote your service or business. Do what you feel you can do well on your own and then seek the advice and assistance of those whose specialties complement your.

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