

Print Advertising



Print advertising is one of the most important marketing tools available to any service with serious intentions of succeeding in the competitive consulting industry. In order to achieve success in print advertising, you must develop and utilize your writing talents and couple those talents with a healthy dose of creative imagination.

This lesson will discuss some of the important considerations involved in print advertising. We will attempt to address the specific types and uses of print advertising in the successful development of a disability consulting service.

A primary tool!

Print advertising is a primary tool in the growth and development of any consulting service. Regardless of the type of service you are offering, you must be able to communicate the benefits of your service effectively. If approached carefully, with a realistic vision of the marketplace, print advertising can be both cost-effective and a dynamic source of public exposure.

There are several considerations that must be addressed before releasing print advertisement of any type. These primary advertising considerations are the ad format, location, message and cost. Understanding how each of the above marketing considerations can affect the final results of your advertising campaign will help tilt the scale in the direction of success.

Advertising format:

The first of the advertising considerations is format. As a business manager you must have some understanding of the variety of print advertising choices that exist. Print advertising contains a multitude of formats that, if properly chosen, can greatly improve the results of your advertising campaign.

Which format is appropriate is determined most by the image you are trying to project. As a disability consultant, you would want to project a friendly and open

service that is still professional and effective. Since there are no set rules controlling when a particular print format can be used, always feel free to experiment.

The following is a list of print advertising formats that are commonly used by consulting services:

Business Cards
Business Card Display
Pamphlets
Brochures
Standup Brochure Display
Classified Advertisement
Display Advertisement
Billboard Advertisement
Advertising Letters

Business Cards:

In the disability consulting field a business card is an absolute necessity. Business cards are designed to be used as a quick reference for your company. A properly constructed business card should contain your company name, your name, business telephone number, street address and an advertising message.

Most companies do not place advertising messages on their business cards. We specifically recommend an advertising message on the business card because this has proven effective in the disability consulting field. The message on your business card should be brief and yet contain a complete description of the main point of your service.

An example ad might read:

"If you're denied disability benefits, we can help! We are experts in disability case representation! We help the disabled obtain cash benefits! There is no charge unless you receive benefits!"

"Save time and get your benefits fast with professional representation. No fees until benefits are paid to you! Get your benefits now! Call..."

"If you were denied disability benefits once, you will probably be denied again

unless you get help. Get your benefits now! Call... All consultations are free!"

Design your business card ad message in such a manner that allows it to stand alone as an advertising focus. A properly designed business card with a direct and dynamic message like those above can be a powerful source of future referrals.

Business Card Display

A business card display is a specially designed advertising unit that contains your primary advertising message in the form of an attention getting display container. This type of display advertisement is essentially a box with an ad message on it containing business cards, leaflets or brochures.

The box container not only delivers an advertising message, it also invites a potential customer to help himself to a business card or flyer for later reference. These displays are designed to be placed in public areas such as lobbies or around cash counters. Help in the design of such displays can be acquired at any business printing establishment or advertising agency.

Pamphlets

Pamphlets are an inexpensive way of introducing your service to the community. A single sided pamphlet can be produced in great volume for next to nothing. You can add colors and picture designs with only a modest increase in the overall price of the pamphlet. Pamphlets are ideal for use in local direct mail campaigns designed to introduce your service to the public. They can be left in public places, handed out by employees or mailed directly to potential customers who request information about your firm.

Pamphlets are designed to deliver your main advertising message in brief or by the use of informational columns. Benefits and other highlights of your service should be listed in the pamphlet. Do not attempt to go into great detail by explaining each and every benefit of your service in a pamphlet. More detailed explanations of a service are best handled by brochure or letter format.

Brochures

Brochures are the backbone of print advertising. This medium is designed to

give specific and sometimes detailed information about your service. A well-designed brochure should contain an introduction to your company's goals, benefits, philosophy, services and payment information.

Brochures can range in size from full multi-paged mailers to multiple paged booklets. Brochures can be expensive to produce with cost depending upon the size, shape, number of pages and colors used. There is also the cost of typesetting and reproduction. The cost factor can be greatly reduced by purchasing a simple desktop publishing program. A desktop publishing program allows you to structure brochures and pamphlets with relative ease and can greatly reduce or eliminate the cost of expensive typesetting.

A desktop publishing program also offers the freedom to change or adjust the copy within your brochure frequently until you find the right marketing language. There is nothing more valuable in marketing than the freedom to test the effectiveness of your advertising message.

A professionally designed brochure is a very effective tool in the growth and development of a disability consulting service. We suggest that if a brochure is used, you only send it to those who have expressed an interest in your service and desire more detailed information before they make a final decision. Do not use brochures as handouts. Pamphlets are far cheaper with general public contact.

Standup Brochure Displays

A standup brochure display is similar to a card display except that a potential customer has access to your brochure as opposed to a business card. If you are able to leave a display in a handicap oriented business or any other location, a brochure display could be very cost effective.

The added power of a full brochure presentation about your service will always bring in more clients. Using just a little imagination, I'm sure you can think of a half dozen places where potential clients might find your brochure helpful.

Presentation brochures should be no larger than four to eight pages. Be sure to send out a copy of your brochure to advocacy and religious organizations to explain your service. You may find that they are willing to allow you to set up a display on their facilities.

Classified Ads

Classified ads are an inexpensive way of introducing your service to the general public. We suggest that you use local newspapers, thrift papers and hometown magazines to place your ads.

Bordered ads tend to get better response simply because they are more noticeable. Use a bordered ad primarily as a means of attracting the customer's attention. Bordered ads are slightly more expensive than regular classified ads. Using short, to-the-point ad copy will save money, but will also attract fewer customers. However, short copy works better than long explanations that only tend to bore or confuse a potential customer. If the customer asks for more information, send a brochure along with an introductory letter explaining your service.

Display Ads

Display ads are superior to classified ads in that they are usually much more noticeable, contain more information and are usually taken more seriously by a potential customer.

In a display ad you also have the option of using your logo to further familiarize a community with your service. The use of logos is most effective in areas where there are several companies competing for clients. Since competition is currently low, I would use the logo space for more message!

In a display ad you are free to place words in interesting configurations that again add to the effect and notability of your advertisement. Display ads usually have borders and are larger than classified ads, which is what sets them apart.

If your ad is not noticed, you will never be called! Therefore, the three most important elements of a successful display ad are message, word structure and ad design. All three of the above elements have the same objective, which is to get the potential customer to notice and respond to your ad.

A display ad will often contain a header or headline that is designed to get the customer's attention. The header is what gets the customer's attention! A headline's visibility may justify the extra expense of a display ad piece.

Billboard Advertising

In large and small cities alike, billboard ads can be an effective way of getting your new firm noticed by the public. This advertising approach can pull in hundreds of clients if properly utilized. If you can afford a billboard ad, we suggest starting with mass transit advertising such as that seen on city buses. You can place a billboard ad both inside and outside of metro buses in most cities. A simple straight- forward message and your phone number is all you need in these types of ads.

Contact a billboard company and your local metro area bus service and ask about this advertising alternative. They will give you all of the details you need and may even help you design an ad at no additional cost.

Advertising Letter

The advertising letter, sometimes referred to as a promotional letter, is one of the most effective methods available for communicating with potential customers. This form of advertising allows you to explain multiple facets of your service in a personalized manner.

Advertising letters have consistently been shown to be the most effective means of stimulating sales, especially when used in conjunction with other advertising forms such as a brochure.

The personalized aspect of an advertising letter cannot be overemphasized. It is the personal nature of the letter, along with a logical flow of information that makes the advertising letter such an effective means of acquiring sales. The structure of an advertising letter is always the same. If you have no experience with writing ad letters, there a number of excellent books on the market that will teach you the basics.

In most ad letters, you must begin with a statement that seizes the attention of potential customers. You must then develop the customer's interest via your follow up comments. The next step is to show the benefits of your service. After the benefits have been shown, you must build credibility via a show of product knowledge. Finally, you must deliver a call to action and a direct request for the sale.

If you are able to produce a well structured, easy to read advertising letter that follows the basic rules above, you can expect to do very well in your service. Do not underestimate the power of a well-written presentation letter!

Advertising Location

Individuals with little knowledge of advertising often think nothing of buying expensive print advertising in the first media source that comes to mind. They spend very little time trying to understand their product, their market or the media they are attempting to use. If you get nothing else from this chapter, try to understand the importance of spending time, not money, to acquire a feel for your market and your potential marketing medium.

One of the first questions you must ask yourself is: Where should I place my ad? This question is even more fundamental than cost considerations because an effective ad properly placed is almost always cost effective.

Most new disability consultants discover that the more they learn about their craft, the easier it is to sell it. When determining an advertising location, ask yourself these simple questions. Where do most people in my community get their news? Is it gotten from newsletters, radio, or is there a source for community news such as a cable community access channel? On a regular basis, where would I find individuals with serious disabilities? All of the above questions are worth exploring if you wish to gain successful exposure in your community.

You should also consider contacting physician's offices and request that they allow you to place a card or brochure display in their offices. Why a doctor's office? Because this is where you will find people suffering from disabling conditions.

Many doctors will allow you to place a small display because a patient who is eligible for disability benefits also receives Medicaid or Medicare payments for doctor's services. Medicare payments insure that the doctor will be paid for his services.

Other often missed advertising sources are hospitals, physical therapy services, university medical schools, occupational therapy services and so on. Using a little imagination and your common sense will enable you to come up with literally dozens of possible referral sources.

Remember, advertising is a lot more than just placing an ad in a newspaper then sitting back hoping to get rich. You must attempt to make your entire community aware that your service exists. Utilize any and all sources for advertising that are most often used by potential clients and your service will

mushroom.

Advertising Message

An advertising message that communicates essential information to your prospective customer is completely dependent upon your ability to write effective advertising copy. The skill of writing advertising copy is known as copy writing. Copy writing is the single most important element in advertising and must be understood in order to achieve success.

The term copy refers to the words used to communicate your message. Each word, phrase and paragraph must work together in the body of your advertisement in order to achieve a clearly communicated message about your service objectives. But how does one learn to write effective ad copy? The answer to this question is easy and here are a few shortcuts. You can greatly improve your ability to write effective ad copy by:

1. Identifying the purpose and goal of your ad.
2. Decide on the message or messages you wish to relay to your customers.
3. Use simple words to explain or describe your message.
4. Write conversationally. This style is more personal and promotes trust.
5. Refer to the client by using words like "you" or "your". The use of these types of words act to personalize your message further. A personal message is more appealing to a potential customer.
6. . Keep the copy flowing. Do not allow your ad to get bogged down by attempting to over-explain any one issue.

The basic structure of advertising copy is the same no matter what type of print advertising approach you are utilizing. In the shortest of ads or the longest of letters, it is recommended that you always use the following structure:

1. Get the customer's attention by using a headline that promises a benefit.
2. Develop interest in the service by informing the client.

3. Show product benefits.
4. Build credibility by educating the client about the disability process or SSA.
5. Ask for action and the sale without hesitation.

Advertising Cost

Advertising cost is an important consideration to most new disability consultants. Many of our students do not have large sums to invest in this project. Recognizing this reality, we suggest careful planning of your advertising campaign as the best way of saving yourself money.

Utilizing the information in this chapter, your next step should be to price out the various advertising approaches mentioned in this text. Pricing advertising is of basic importance because it can vary considerably from one area of the country to another. Advertising price differences can determine whether a particular approach is realistic given your location.

Always look for advertising bargains by shopping around. For example, it is extremely important to find the right printer. Attempt to formulate business relationships with your printer as a means of saving money. Relationships between yourself and advertising vendors can be created by using repeat work agreements or bulk discounts.

Try to produce as much of your own advertising materials as possible. Finally, consider starting your business on a part-time basis to allow yourself time to learn the ropes. Be patient and take your time! Most successful people will tell you that the surest way to ruin a great opportunity is to rush perfection.

SUMMATION

The four most important print advertising considerations are:

1. Format.
2. Location.
3. Message.
4. Cost.

The effective utilization of these four elements of print advertising is key to creating successful and dynamic ads that get results.

