

Advertising Your Home Business on a Budget

By Stone Evans

Advertising Your Home Business on a Budget

Stone Evans
webmaster@home-business.com

The Home Biz Guy <http://Home-Business-Journal.com>

When you are starting out in a new home business and no one knows who you are, one of the greatest challenges you will face is how to drum up new business.

If there were not people in your community or marketplace that you knew who needed your products or services, you probably would not have started your business to begin with. But, once you have talked to those who you personally knew who needed your what you offer, then your next task is to find others who will help keep your doors open.

Many people know that they must turn to advertising at some point in the future, but they hope that day will be long down the road. For some, this utopian concept will come to fruition. But for the rest of us in the real world, we must come up with creative solutions for meeting our home business advertising needs while working within our budget.

Most people have a misconception about having to spend lots of money in order to advertise their home business. When you start out, you honestly will not have much money available for advertising, and if you do, you should still spend it wisely.

Before you jump headfirst into the world of advertising, let me share some of the lessons I have learned concerning this most important topic.

LESSON #1

It does not have to cost an arm and a leg to advertise your home business, unless you fail to plan and fail to test.

As much as is possible, you should always test your advertising. If you jump in and start dumping tons of money in to advertising without first testing your advertising, you might find yourself

broke and without sales at the end of the road. Most people who commit this error write off their failure on the home business they chose or the economy or any of a hundred other excuses. But, if they are unwilling to take responsibility for their mistake, they will never learn from their mistake. Don't let this be you.

LESSON #2

All testing should be done in blocks. If you begin to advertise simultaneously in newspapers, radio and television, how will you know which advertising is bringing people to your cash register? You won't. All you will know that something might be working, but you will not know what is actually doing the trick.

Even if you tell people in your advertising to tell you how they found you, my experience shows that fewer than 10% of the people ever will tell you anything --- and those people who do may not even get the facts straight! You cannot rely on your customers to tell you what advertising is working for your home business. You must put in the extra effort to know for yourself.

LESSON #3

Only when you have a proven and solid advertising portfolio should you venture to drop big bucks in an advertising campaign. Even then, you should be careful to keep further measurements to determine how much the maximum advantage of an ad would be. Sometimes you might be able to reach ten times as many people, but depending on the kind of media and other factors, the additional exposure will only generate twice as many sales. Keep your eye attuned to situations like this to get the most from your advertising dollars.

LESSON #4

As Lesson #3 illustrates, sometimes your best advertising investment may actually cost you less money. When you are first starting out, whether you are running a home business or a business outside of your home, you need to be able to get people talking and thinking about your business.

If you are busy testing ads in media's such as the newspaper, magazines, radio, and television, you need to learn ways of promoting your business that do not require large cash expenditures. A few examples are:

- Word of Mouth
- Business Cards
- Press Releases

- Non-Primetime Ads on Radio and Television

Here is more information about each type of low-cost advertising:

WORD OF MOUTH

This of course is the cheapest kind of advertising on the planet --- it does not cost you anything. Ask your customers if they know anyone who could also use your products or services. When they are happy with your offerings and service, they will be willing to tell you whom you can contact, and they will pass the word for you.

BUSINESS CARDS

You can usually pick up 500 business cards for about \$20. When you do, hand them out. Do not give more than a couple of cards to each person. If they need more cards from you, they will ask.

Some people are known to network with others on a regular basis. Some of these people are also known to be always looking for an extra few bucks. With these people, you can suggest to them that if they write their name on the back of one of your business cards and the card is presented to you, then you will pay a referral fee to them. You do not have to offer much --- sometimes one dollar is enough. Look at your home business and your offerings and decide how much would be a good referral fee.

PRESS RELEASES

Press Releases are a good source for generating news about your home business. The business editor at your local newspaper is always on the lookout for a good business story to fill the business news section of the newspaper.

Of course, the business editor understands the economics of running a paper and is more inclined to run your story if you buy advertising in his/her publication, but will still print stories for special events and openings.

The important thing to remember about Press Releases is that it must be constructed in the form of a news story. Even if you are a sole proprietorship, quotes from you should be written in a third person format: John Doe said, *Your quote here.*

A Press Release should pack the most important information at the beginning of the copy, and leave extra details towards the end.

You should always provide the reporter who gets the task a simple and easy way for him/her to contact you directly. Often

the reporter will want to contact you to get details that will enhance their take on your story.

To learn more about creating Press Releases, you may check out Rusty Cawley's site: <http://www.PRrainmaker.com/>

NON-PRIMETIME ADS ON RADIO AND TELEVISION

Believe it or not, some of the best rates for radio and television are on the overnight and non-primetime venues. These target times are not a total waste as they can easily keep the infomercial people in business.

These off-hours are just less populated than the primetime hours.

Don't be afraid to check your local radio and television rates for non-primetime hours to see what bargains may exist. With television, primetime is 7pm to 10pm. With radio, primetime is 8am to 5pm. This sure leaves a whole lot of hours available to advertise your home business at discount rates!

IN CONCLUSION

When it comes down to it, there is a lot to understand about advertising, but when you have the basic knowledge down pat, everything will fall into place and bring more dollars to your bank account.

~~~~~

Stone Evans publishes Home Business Tips, a fresh and informative newsletter dedicated to supporting people like YOU! If you're looking for the \*best rated\* home business opportunities, the latest time saving tools and helpful support from an honest friend in the business, come by and grab a F-R-E-E subscription today at: <http://Home-Business.com>

[Get-Articles.com](http://Get-Articles.com) : 1000's of reprintable business and internet marketing-related articles.

[Submit your article for reprint.](#)