

# Easy-to-Follow Tips on Constructing Promotional Materials for Micro and Small Businesses

## SPECIALIST SERVICES FOR THE SELF-EMPLOYED

Did you know? There are more than 2 million self-employed people in Australia.

When you are in business for yourself you need all the help you can find. At Independent Contractors of Australia we specialize in issues for the self-employed/micro-business person.

To assist we have produced a series of easy to use templates and practical advice covering:

- Business Plans
- Marketing Plans/Audits
- Marketing Research
- Finance
- Promotional Hints
- Contracts

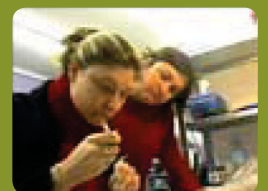
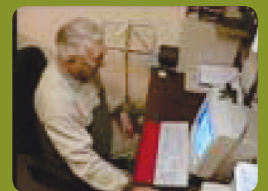
We have also produced a series of short video clips. We've interviewed self-employed people about what they say are the most important things to do in operating your own business. They talk about:

- Cash flow and debt management
- Work-life interface and balance
- Facing difficult times
- And more

You can find all these practical tools and information at:

[www.contractworld.com.au](http://www.contractworld.com.au)

We also keep you up to date on issues for the self-employed.



## Easy-to-Follow

# Tips on How to Construct a Flyer, Advertisement, Web Site & Other Promotional Mediums for Micro and Small Businesses

Briefly detailed below are some very general and useful tips/information on constructing a range of popular and common promotional mediums.

The first thing to do is to ask yourself whether you are trying to be informative or persuasive in your communication and/or promotion. There is often a need for both approaches and it is not always prudent to try and be persuasive or to achieve both methods (i.e. persuasive and informative) within one promotional device.

Everything old is new again, and the basic technique of AIDA – which has been around for decades, still applies, particularly in persuasive promotion and communications. AIDA stands for *attention, interest, desire and action*. AIDA is about trying to stand out in a cluttered promotional and media landscape to make an impact in promoting your business. It is not always what you think that will work in promoting your business, but the feedback from your target customers, which probably has a greater likelihood of success.

Persuasive styles are good for promotional tools that are designed to try and attract maximum interest (and enquiries) to your business or brands. They are bold, catchy, enticing, strong images and big on trying to be memorable.

Informative styles of communication are designed to outline content or information in a dispassionate manner. This could be for a technical manual or to explain how an item works (or the specific features of a product or service) or similar. This style of communication could be good for repeat clients and/or loyal clients to a business, where there is less need for overt persuasive styles of promotion and communication.

## Flyers

The flyer is a useful promotional tool for all businesses (new and existing) of all sizes.

The flyer can be used over a range of mediums, such as letterbox or PO box distribution, online within a website (digital) and as part of a sales (personal selling) tool kit.

The key thing is to think about your target readers or consumers of the flyer and design it in a manner that is appealing to them (not you, the business owner).

Get assistance from a professional designer who understands how space, colours, fonts and images (eg. photos) work together. Don't do it yourself and do not get a teenager with no formal design background (but is good with some design, publishing software packages) to undertake your design and promotion needs. The strong likelihood is that it will look amateurish!

Less is more with this type of device.

With the flyer have a bold and noticeable headline or offer. Consider a photographic image or range of images. As the saying goes, a picture paints a thousand words (provided it is the right picture/image and does what you are intending it or them to do). Next issue is to outline your range of offerings to the market. Start with the major products and/or services and the specific variants under each major heading or headline product/service activity.

Finish the flyer with some contact details (address or website) and the benefits of using your firm or business.

Today the flyer could be a PDF document and designed to be used in a short run where it is updated regularly throughout a year or season. The PDF can be easily digitally printed and is designed to reproduce well in colour, black and white, etc.

## Advertising – Electronic

The types of advertising that could occur here are *TV (free to air and pay), radio and cinema*.

Typically, these mediums are more the domain of large advertisers and businesses. However, there are some exceptions and this is in rural Australia where the cost of advertising air-time is generally much more affordable. This is not the case in the major metropolitan centres of Australia, where electronic advertising is very costly and out of reach of the vast majority of small businesses.

If electronic advertising is a route you would like to take with your business it is advisable to use the services of a professional advertising agency or the in-house services of the medium (i.e. TV stations and radio stations themselves, as most have very good and reasonably cost-effective production capabilities) to project a suitable image to the target customers.

## Advertising – Non-Electronic

The types of advertising that could occur here are *newspapers* (mainstream and community/local papers), *magazines* (popular, women's, lifestyle, trade and etc.), *outdoors* (posters and billboards), *transport* (on buses, trams on adshell bus-stops and other) and other (eg. shop-a-docket).

As with the other areas, use a design/creative professional to assist with generating the look or image you are seeking for your business and that will work well with the target customers.

With newspapers and magazines the four key principles of print advertising for you to control and decide are –

- Frequency of running or using the ad by paper, magazine, etc.
- The creative / artistic design and message of the ad

- Size of the advertisement (physical size of the ad)
- Placement within newspapers and magazines (where the ad will be positioned within the medium)

With outdoor and transport advertising, the visual appeal and message are the keys to success, as well as where your ads are located and how many of them will be distributed in a target area (or market).

## Advertising – Online (Web)

There are still two main types of web site –

- The **electronic flyer or catalogue** which is both persuasive and informative and irregularly updated (probably needs to be updated every month or second month to keep it alive and of interest to target customers)
- The truly **interactive site** that is technically advanced, has an e-commerce component and needs regular technical support and update (much of the content management can be done in house these days, but technical support should be readily available)

Today it is a good idea for **all** businesses to have a web presence, as many target customers will look for you on-line (and in some instances only on-line).

The **electronic flyer** is all that is needed for a business that does not vary its offerings (products or services) very often. The website must still have a good appearance and do justice to the image you are intending to portray in the market place. An expense of \$500 or less should be all that is required to register the domain and build the site and to allow you to update the content on a monthly or bi-monthly basis. Engage a professional who knows what they are doing (and pay the \$500 or so to gain the image you are seeking) not an amateur or high school student (who may be good with some elements but not the whole design and business related needs).

The **interactive site** is one that will require a greater level of expertise to maintain and for most small businesses this requires the ongoing contracting of external expertise. The site may be the prime method of client interaction and thus is very important to maintain and update regularly (perhaps at least daily and in some cases hourly). The engagement of contractors here needs to be done very cautiously, as the supplier must be able to meet regular and irregular technical needs.

## Other

There are many other methods of promotion and these include –

- *Personal selling* (includes sales and negotiation with potential clients and existing clients)
  - Do I need to improve my sales and negotiating skills? (maybe do a short course to improve)
- *Sales promotion* (includes loyalty programmes, competitions, sweepstakes and etc.)
  - Mainly for support of main promotional methods (eg. advertising, flyers, etc.)
- Trade and consumer shows and exhibitions
  - Gets you and your business where your target customers are (very useful for some industries)
- *Sponsorship* (where your business pays money to another organisation to receive your branding exposure on or in their public activities)
  - Good for social responsibility in local communities and other reasons

- **Publicity / PR**

Publicity is where you receive unpaid support in mediums (eg. local newspapers and trade magazines) and PR is where you pay to get your business featured on a TV programme such as “postcards” or print support in a specific publication that is supportive of your business

- **Direct Marketing/Mail** (includes digital and electronic communication as well as traditional mail communication)

A costly method to get to your target but normally five times plus more effective than letterbox drops (because it is targeted to your target customers). You need to develop a list or pay for one to be developed which meets your needs

- **Signage** (on vehicles on buildings and other)

Every little bit of support helps and signage, particularly creative signage can be very visible and memorable. People do write down phone details and web sites from trade and related vehicles

- **Telephone** (including tele-sales/marketing, SMS promotional messaging, other)

Can your business afford this and is it worthwhile for you?

- **Networking** (including social networking sites)

For targets under 40 to 45 it is very important in this day and age to network and use social networking tools (eg. linkedin, facebook and others)

- **Other** (including business cards, uniforms, gimmicks, flyers and other)

Some of these other methods are very important in given industries and must be evaluated