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ADVERTISING



## Helping Your Business Grow by Using Ad Specialties — Part I

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### Whachamacallit?

You've heard the terms: "ad specialties," "promotional items," "giveaways," "tsatskes," "whatchamacallit's," but what exactly are they? The latest, hippest, most effective ways to instill your company name into your customer's mind.

Ad specialties items...

- Are usually imprinted with a company's name, logo or message
- Include useful or decorative articles of merchandise that are utilized in marketing and communication programs
- Take the form of items like t-shirts, pens, mugs, magnets, measuring cups, and more

### Image is Everything

One of the keys to effectively marketing your company is to "brand" it with an image. It's important that your firm has an "identity" that tells your customers who you are. The effective use of ad specialties can aid you in making people familiar with your identity. For example, a local chiropractic office recently distributed "spine" key chains to their patients. Not only did this make their patients feel appreciated, but it instantly identified what the office did.

It's also important to make your presence felt in the community. By circulating your promotional items throughout your business area, you'll be creating goodwill and giving people something to keep. (That something just so happens to have your phone number emblazoned on it!). In another example a regional hospital is known for its complimentary distribution of pill organizers. Along with the traditional compartments for days of the week, their pill organizers have the hospital's name and phone number listed on the back.

### Doing it

So, how do you go about making a splash with ad specialties?

Use promotional items at every opportunity. In fact, create opportunities in which to give them. Think of the situations in which you commonly do business, then find a way to bring promotional items into the mix. Here are a few examples:

- A gym gives out a free T-shirt to every new member who registers
- An orthodontic office hands out complimentary pocket calendars to all new patients with the date of their next visit already written inside

*continued...*

A marketing communications company

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- A freelance writer distributes pens with her name and number to all interested prospects
- A large corporation sends wrist watches with its name engraved on the face to clients as a thank you
- An architectural firm gives golf balls with its logo to contractors, electricians, and masons
- A school gives graduating seniors hooded sweatshirts with the school name and mascot imprinted on each one

Here are some additional ideas to help get you jump-start your thought process. Remember, ad specialties can be used in any of the following situations:

- Business gifts
- Employee relations
- Orientation programs
- Corporate communications
- Trade shows
- Co-op programs
- Advertising campaigns
- Nonprofit fundraising
- Public awareness campaigns
- Promotion of brand awareness
- Promotion of brand loyalty
- Employee incentives & awards
- New product introduction
- Gifts for participants in marketing research and/or focus groups
- Stocking company stores



- To create customer goodwill
- To increase direct mail response
- To generate new customers

So, what are you waiting for? Pick up the phone and contact a reputable company that specializes in promotional products. This company should be able to discuss your business with you and help you decide which products to choose. It should provide you with ideas and suggest ways to incor-

porate your existing logo into the items you select  
Happy shopping!

**Coming soon:** In my next installment you'll see the numbers behind the advice. Research shows that the use of promotional products in advertising campaigns increases response rates. It also shows that ad specialties keep customers coming back.

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