

# ***EN-ABLE YOUR ADVERTISING***

by Diana Ratliff

So you've got a dynamic product. You've determined that there's a definite need (or want) for it. And you know what you want to say in your advertising copy. Congratulations! (You're way ahead of most of us!) But assuming you DO eventually get to that point ... and most of us do, after some trial and error, perhaps ... what happens next? Now that you have a product, a need, and a message, how do you get that message out to your potential customers? You have an ever-increasing (and often bewildering) array of options. There are the tried-and-true alternatives such as billboards, classified ads, direct mail, display ads, telemarketing, business cards, bulletin boards, ad specialties and the like. Then there are the newer, "high-tech" methods such as CD-ROM presentations and Internet marketing (Web sites and e-mail). How do you know which method to choose? You may find it useful to keep the following criteria in mind when you're trying to select the advertising media for your business. This list is by no means all-inclusive, but it does provide a starting point for your decision-making process.

**Is the option portable?** If your product or service is purchased on impulse or when an emergency occurs, it's important to have your company information immediately available. A good example of a portable ad could be a business card or a magnet on the refrigerator. A poor example would be a billboard (unless the sign promotes a tow service and you happen to break down right in front of it!)

**Is the option adaptable?** If you travel on business, you can carry a telephone script with you and call from any hotel room. You can modify your script as you go along. You can even use selected words or phrases when you meet someone in person. So telephone prospecting could be a very adaptable alternative for you.

**Is the option acceptable?** If your message is to be seen in a positive light, it has to be delivered in a manner that your prospect finds acceptable. Telemarketing is often seen as intrusive. Direct mail may be seen as "junk mail." On the other hand, an ad in the classified section of your newspaper is accepted readily because your prospect chooses whether or not to read it. It's also associated with a valuable service (delivery of the news.)

**Is it affordable?** Sometimes your finances are tight. If you're absolutely certain you've found THE best advertising option, then by all means find the money and get started. Borrow. Barter. Beg. Whatever. (So long as it's legal, of course!) Still, some options are much more cost-effective than others are. You can get 1,000 full-color business cards made for less than \$100. E-mail advertising (depending on how you collect your addresses) can be done very inexpensively also.

**Is the option capable of conveying the information you need?** A direct mail letter allows you page-after-page to explain a new concept. A CD-ROM presentation can add an audio or visual element, which may be essential for your customer to fully grasp your offering. At the opposite extreme, a simple sign tacked to a bulletin board ("FREE adorable puppies! Call 555-5555") may be all it takes to make the sale. There is, unfortunately, no "one size fits all" advertising approach, simply because so many variables are involved.

Advertising methods or messages that are extremely effective for one company may be a complete flop for another. You need to objectively assess the product or service itself, the industry you're in, the people you're trying to reach, and the risk involved with the purchase. Even the time of year and the name of your company can influence whether or not someone chooses to do business with you. You may have to test, test, and test yet again before you find the effective approach (or, more realistically, COMBINATION of approaches) that's right for YOUR business. However, when you find the advertising method that works for you, the results can be extraordinarily **profitABLE**.

**And now the Good News . . .**

***Coffee News* is designed to be portable, acceptable, capable and affordable in meeting your advertising needs.**

**Call Patrick Lyons @ *Coffee News of Scottsdale* 602-323-1111 to discover how we can help you reach your business goals.**