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## Advertising - introduction

The business world is very competitive and each business must seek ways of getting that extra edge. The question is not so much whether a business can afford to advertise but whether it can afford not to advertise. To succeed, you must put your business and its products before prospective buyers because they are not going to be looking around to find you.

Even worse, if they are looking for a particular product or service, then it is more than likely that out of 20 or 30 to choose from, your business may miss out. It is therefore all about putting yourself forward and telling them who you are, where you are and what you can do for them. If you don't advertise and promote yourself, then this will be to your detriment because you can bet your bottom dollar that your competitors will be doing just that.

If you were able to make all the profit you wanted from the few orders that you receive every year in your small business then you could say that you had no need for advertising.

If on the other hand you wanted to expand the business or required increased sales to keep going in order to meet your profit objectives then you will need to contact large numbers of customers - this is where advertising comes in.

Advertising is a form of paid communication using the various media (press, radio, television, postage and cinema etc) to spread the word about your goods and services. Effective advertising will increase your sales above the level that they would have reached if no advertising had been done.

If you are new in business, or if you are looking at expanding your current small business, then good advertising and promotion can do some of the following things:

- Build the image of your business.
- Let customers know where you are and what you do.
- Launch a new product or service.
- Advise about your products and services and the ways that customers can get benefit from using them.
- Generate new awareness of your products with a totally new audience or a target market.
- Increase the desire and demand for your products or services.
- Encourage your customers to call or write for information about your products
- Increase the frequency by which your customers call to purchase off you.

### Advertising to promote

Advertising and promotion includes everything that you do to sell your product or services. It is the traditional method of promoting your business and its products. There are of course many avenues for advertising, which include daily newspapers, local newspapers, radio, television, letterbox fliers, newsletters, advertising billboards, and Internet. Each has its own advantages and disadvantages and the type of media that you finally end up using depends entirely on your business as well as the audience that you are trying to reach.



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The amount of money you have available for advertising and promotion, as well as the overall targets of the business can also determine it. There are of course other forms of advertising and promotion, which include direct marketing, telemarketing, use of public relations techniques and general marketing such as networking.

## Advertising to communicate

Advertising is your way of communicating your message to your target market to generate a response. How you handle this area of the business can determine your sales, your company's image, ongoing financial requirements and ultimately the success of the business or its survival. If required, advertising agencies are able to co-ordinate, plan and monitor the full program that has been decided on.

Advertising has always been a controversial area in business and most business owners have strong opinions about the value of advertising. Many business owners are reluctant to spend money on advertising because direct results are usually not seen immediately. But, as those who believe in advertising and promotion will say, if you don't advertise and promote yourself, then you do so at your own peril.

## Further information

The following fact sheets provide further information on these issues:

- Advertising – advanced
- Evaluate and monitor your advertising
- How to advertise
- Marketing plan
- Where to advertise