

Off the Wall Marketing Ideas

Office Depot Web Café - Bonus Materials
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MEMORABLE ANSWERS TO THE MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED MARKETING QUESTIONS

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What is the easiest and least offensive way to ask for client testimonials?

- Ask after receiving rave reviews
- Ask them by saying "Gee, I really appreciate your saying that and I'm in the process of updating my promotional materials and I wonder if you wouldn't mind jotting that down for me to use in my new client testimonial sheet?"

Do you need permission to reprint testimonials in your promotional materials?

- Yes, you don't want to surprise them

What do you do if a client never seems to write the testimonial even though they've agreed to do it?

- People are busy, don't take it personally
- Ask them if they wouldn't mind if you drafted a letter on their behalf
- You could say, "Jim, I know you've been really busy with the development project you're working on, would it be helpful for me to write down a couple of the comments you made and fax it over to you for your approval?"



What if I'm just starting out and don't have clients to get references from?

- Volunteer your time to non-profit and professional organizations
- Join and become active in your industry associations or your prospects and clients professional organizations
- Use the names of people you've worked with in the past from your previous employment

Should I mail a promotional kit to a prospect?

- Not always — ask yourself if he or she qualifies as a "hot prospect" if so, you may want to arrange a meeting and give out your promotional kit then
- It may be more cost effective for you to send to a prospect your company newsletter or a one-sheet that outlines and explains your business
- Follow-up after you receive requests for your information (see Home Office Computing Article, Pest Control: How To Be Persistent Without Being Obnoxious")

Is it more effective to call before sending something to a client or prospect, like a promotional kit?

- Yes, it alerts them and helps to determine if they are the appropriate person
- Saves you time and money; saves them aggravation
- Be brief and to the point
- Call, then mail and then call again — you always want to follow-up
- Indicate when you will be following-up so they expect your phone call



Are postcards effective in letting people know that a promotional kit is being sent or any other piece of information is going to be mailed out?

- Yes, they are a cost-effective way to create another positive impression
- You're perceived as being on top of things
- Be consistent with your overall company image and identity — your quintessential self
- Saves time and money
- Handwritten messages are acceptable when sending postcards, however, type mailing labels, envelopes and more formal correspondence

When writing bylined articles, should you get permission to reprint the article once published?

- Rules may vary from publication to publication, or from region to region
- Ownership rights (paid vs. non-paid writing opportunities)
- If you sign a contract with a publication giving them the ownership rights, you shouldn't have a problem reprinting that information
- Call the publication and ask for their permission to reprint; if you need to write a letter simply state, "I am writing to request permission to reprint (name of the article) that appeared in (name of publication) on (date) for the purposes of _____. Please send your written consent to me at (address). Thank you for your consideration."

What if you have good ideas for articles you could submit to your local newspaper, but don't have a talent for putting it on paper?

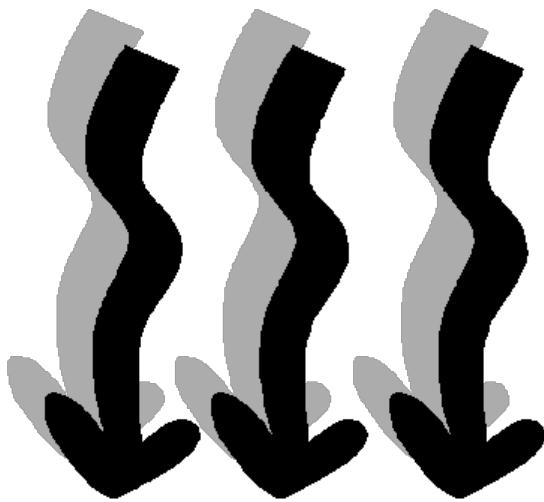
- Find a freelancer
- Call the business editor of the local daily newspaper in your area and ask if he or she does freelance writing — or could they refer you to someone who does?



- The National Writers Union has local offices in New York and Boston for example — they're a professional organization made up of professional writers looking for work. The Author's Guild is another association you could post a job listing with.
- College career service centers and alumni offices could post a job for a student interested in ghost-writing articles for you.

Should you expect a professional organization that asks you to speak for no fee to cover your expenses associated with a trip like travel, hotel and food?

- Don't refuse it but probably don't expect it either
- It's not as likely to be reimbursed if your prospects are attending the seminar and you have the potential to gain clients



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