



# How to use premiums to promote your business

Imprinting promotional items, also known as premiums, is a great way to promote your business. You can put your name and logo on hundreds if not thousands of items – t-shirts, pens, mugs, key chains, puzzles, first aid kits, water bottles and more. Hand them out to people; they'll have something tangible that will remind them about your business every time they use it.



But if your idea of a premium is slapping a logo on an item, then you're missing a great marketing opportunity. A little promotional planning can go a long ways towards getting your promotional money's worth. Here are some tips to help you do this:

- Who will get the premiums? Are they potential customers, current customers, past customers, employees, trade show attendees or someone else? Knowing who will be getting the premiums allows you to customize each message for that specific audience.
- What is the premium going to be used for? A thank you gift for an employee is an entirely different message than an enticement for a potential client to give you business.
- What result are you looking for when you hand out this premium? Do you want a past customer to pick up the phone and call you for another job? Do you want a trade show attendee to remember meeting you? Keep in mind the result you want when crafting the message.
- Will the premium be used with other supporting print materials? For instance, is this part of a direct mail campaign? Or will you hand



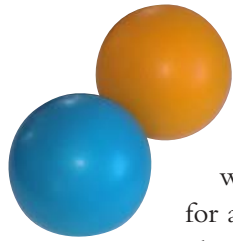
potential clients a brochure and promotional item at the same time? Make sure the printed materials and premium work together as a package – it will make the message so much stronger.

Once you have the answers to those questions, you're ready to craft the message. Here are some examples of how you do that:

- If the premium is a gift to your employees, then you don't need contact information or what your company does or why customers should buy your company's products or services. Instead, the message should be about teamwork or appreciation for service or recognition for a job well done. Humor may even be appropriate for this audience.
- If the premium is a promotion for potential customers, then you should make sure you have complete contact information on it. If you can swing it, you should also add why customers should buy your products or services. If the premium is going to be used with other supporting material (for instance, as part of a direct mail package) then you should make sure the message on the premium fits with the message in the printed materials.
- If the premium is for current customers, then you don't need to add benefits of doing business with you, but you should still have some contact information on the premium. You may also want to add some sort of "thank you for your business" message.
- If the premium is for past customers, then you need to address somehow the reason why they stopped doing business with you, even if it's only a "We miss you" message. This group also needs contact information on the premium.



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• If the premium is for trade show attendees, you're probably dealing with a mix of current, past and potential customers. You're going to want to make sure the message works for all of them. You may also want to make sure the premium "matches" any other promotional materials you hand out at the trade show.

Don't forget to ask your graphic designer for help with your promotional item's



message. Many of them work with copywriters who specialize in crafting messages for all sorts of promotions. Feel free to ask questions or gather information about your specific situation.

*Karin Wilson owns Wild Woman Design, LLC, a graphic design firm. She can be reached via her Web site, [www.wildwomandesign.com](http://www.wildwomandesign.com), where you can also sign up for her monthly "Graphically Speaking" column – full of tips to help make your graphic design a success. Copyright 2004 Wild Woman Design.*

