

4 QUESTIONS TO ASK ABOUT YOUR BUSINESS BEFORE YOU ADVERTISE

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4 QUESTIONS TO ASK ABOUT YOUR BUSINESS BEFORE YOU ADVERTISE

By Nicole Shields

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No matter what kind of business you own or manage, you are faced with selecting mediums or methods of advertising or promoting your business. It doesn't matter if you are a retailer or a consultant working from a home based business. Every business markets themselves in some manner. Some businesses use traditional advertising mediums such as the newspaper, and others use less obvious means such as word of mouth.

Knowing what how best to spend time, money and energy will help you grow your business quickly. In order to select the most effective medium or method of promoting your business, you must evaluate your sales process. Here are 4 things to ask yourself about your unique sales process:

1. Do my customers seek out my product or service? In other words, do they know they need it?
2. How well is your company and product/service category known?
3. How easy is it for a prospect to buy and use your product/service?
4. Can the prospect receive the benefits immediately?

Understanding where your prospect is prior to your contact as well as understanding the process they must go through in order to receive the benefits of your product or service will dictate the mediums and advertising style that will work best for your business. There is no need for a consultant to take out expensive ads in the newspaper, which would be unlikely to produce any response. However, for a retailer, the newspaper will likely generate considerable response.

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All too often I see small business owners taking ads in the newspaper simply because it's their local paper and they think that's what they have to do to generate sales. For some businesses yes, but for many others, no. By taking the time to evaluate your sales cycle, your brand/industry recognition, and the prospect/customer experience you will be able to select the marketing mix which will generate new customers and increased sales for the smallest marketing expenditure.

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Nicole Shields is the author of the 7 Step Marketing Plan manual, a complete system, including the Quick Start Kit, a digital file of forms and spreadsheets, which makes it easy for business owners and managers to write, implement and manage a profit-producing marketing plan. There is a Sales Process Evaluator, which walks you through a complete series of questions to rank your business so that you can select the best mediums for your business. To learn more visit:  
<http://www.1shoppingcart.com/app/adtrack.asp?AdID=41836>

### **Should You Advertise on TV?**

**By BIG Mike McDaniel**

Should You Advertise on TV? by BIG Mike McDaniel

When people discover my background in advertising, the questions flow. One of the most frequent questions is "Should I advertise on TV?"

I can't answer that questions until I ask a number of questions first.

Do you have an advertising plan?

Are you working on a firm budget?

What are you trying to accomplish with your advertising?

Where are you spending your money now?

Usually by the 4th question the happy face becomes one of disappointment.

Contractors don't build a building without a plan, and you shouldn't advertise without a plan. The first action is to determine what you want your advertising to do. Most small and medium businesses do not have the bucks for long term image, so they focus on a call to action or

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proclaiming benefits (not features).

Can TV do that? Probably. Can you afford it? Probably not. Local TV ads even in the smallest of television markets are expensive. You can buy cheap ads, but the cost is factored to the number of viewers. The cheaper the ads, the fewer the viewers. How many folks do you know are glued to the tube at 5:45 AM?

You can get on TV by using the Cable TV in your market. With Cable, you can buy a package that's spread over 15 or more cable channels. Beware the number of viewers and the shoddy production. Get my article "Cable Ads 5 Bucks" by sending a blank eMail to [MailTo:CableAds@BigIdeasGroup.com](mailto:MailTo:CableAds@BigIdeasGroup.com)

Some people in business believe you haven't "arrived" until your business is on TV or on a billboard, or both. Funny, I know of hundreds of businesses making big bucks that don't use either.

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