

Image is Everything!

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Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!

Image is Everything!

By Janice Byer, CCVA, MVA

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Marketing is an integral part to any business, especially for a Virtual Assistance who has to rely on a professional and creative image. How you get the word out about your VA service can have a tremendous impact on the success of your business. Just throwing together a business card or brochure to hand out, or a quick website is not enough. You need to create a marketing strategy, one that will portray you as capable of creating an image for your clients.

Your marketing strategy is all about creativeness and communication. How you communicate your message will have an effect on how you are perceived in the minds of your customers. If your own marketing material is not enough to get the attention of your potential clients, or if they have a negative perception, then how can you expect them to have confidence in you being able to help them with their needs?

Having a clear idea of what drives your customer to buy can help you to communicate to them why they need your services and how you can create and maintain their image.

So how do you go about making sure that you are saying the right thing and portraying the right image, and that your potential client will keep you in mind?

1. Determine the objective of your marketing material. What do you want to accomplish with this piece of advertising? Do you want your client to call you for further information, do you want them to cash in a coupon or to bookmark your website for future reference? Give them a directive.
2. Decide who will be your target market. Are you trying to sell to a large corporation or to the mother of small children? `Who' is going to buy from you is `who' you need to focus your message on.
3. Compose a positioning statement. In a single sentence convey exactly how you want your customer to perceive you, something that will stick in their mind. (ie. "We specialize in word processing.....")

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4. Now, add a primary benefit to that sentence. (ie. "...so you can get experienced help when you are short staffed or overloaded...")
5. And then, throw in a supporting benefit. (ie. "...saving you time and money on your staffing needs.")
6. Now, work with this sentence to get your main message across. If you only had space for one message, what would it be?
7. Add any other supporting messages that will convey the benefits of having your product or service. (ie. "No need to provide equipment. We do everything in our office.")
8. Give your customer an opportunity to provide a desired response. How do you want them to react to your communication? (ie. "Wow, this is a great service that will save me money" or "I could really use this service to get a handle on things.")
9. Make sure to project the right tone in your communication. Use a number of adjectives to describe your product or service, expressing how you want to be regarded. (ie. professional, innovative, exciting, friendly, newsworthy, creative, etc.)
10. Last, but not least, consider how you are going to execute your message. Does it fit best on a 3–fold brochure and what kind of paper do you want to use? Do you need a tear–off coupon on it? Does your message fit best on one page of a website or several pages? How are you going to turn your marketing strategy into hard copy or virtual copy?

All in all, you are designing and executing your marketing strategy to attract potential clients and to show them your creativeness and capabilities. Always have them in mind when putting ideas down on paper or on the web. What you think is appealing may not be appealing to your customer. Ensure that your message will catch their eye and impress upon them that your service can make their lives so much easier in more ways than one.... and better than your competitor!

Janice Byer is the founder of Docu–Type Administrative & Web Design Services (), a professional Virtual Assistance and Website Design company, specializing

in helping small business owners get ahead. She is a certified Canadian Virtual Assistant and Master Virtual Assistant and winner of the Most Successful Start Up 2000 and Home Based Business of the Year 2000 Awards

Terms Used the in the Stock Photography Business

By Kelly Paal

So you are a small business person or web designer and you want to purchase some stock

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photography for your website. Great. Photography is a wonderful way to improve the emotional impact of your site. But there are a few terms unique to the stock photography business that you should know.

Royalty Free – you'll see this term often. What it means is that you pay a one time fee for an image and you can use it for as many times as you want for as long as you wish. It is a great way to get inexpensive photos. Now if you are concerned that your competitor would or could use the same image as you, photographers and agencies can continue to sell the image after you purchase it, then you need:

Rights Managed – this one is next term you'll see. This means that you pay a fee for the image based on how, where, how long, and how many people will see the image. This one will cost you a lot more in most cases. This is worth it if you do not want your competitor using the same image for the same purpose. Usually the stock agency or photographer also agree not to sell the image to others in your field for the time that you are using the image. So you can see why this option protects your use of the image but you'll also pay much more for this protection. Remember too that, at some point, you decided to discontinue using/paying for the image the agency or photographer can then sell the image to someone else, even someone in your field.

Flat Rate – this term isn't quite at common but it is similar to royalty free. Usually this means that you pay a one time fee for an image, but it can only be used for one purpose by one person. Pricing will be higher than royalty free but less than rights managed.

Copyright – even with royalty free you are still only purchasing the right to use an image not the image itself. All images are property of the agency or photographer who owns them. How do you know who owns them, there is usually a © symbol with date and name of the person or agency who owns the image. No matter what you paid for the image you are NOT the owner of the image. This means you cannot remove the copyright information, alter the photo, use it as part of a logo that you own a copyright, or resale the image as your own.

These terms will get you started but remember there can be differences in these definitions from agency to agency and photographer to photographer. Every agency and photographer selling stock images should have a legal or license page to explain these terms and any others that they use, if they don't you may want to move onto another site. Be aware, read all the information, and know what you are buying.

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Kelly Paal is a Freelance Nature and Landscape Photographer, exhibiting nationally and internationally. Recently she started her own business Kelly Paal Photography (

). She has an educational background in photography, business, and

commercial art. She enjoys applying graphic design and photography principles to her web design.

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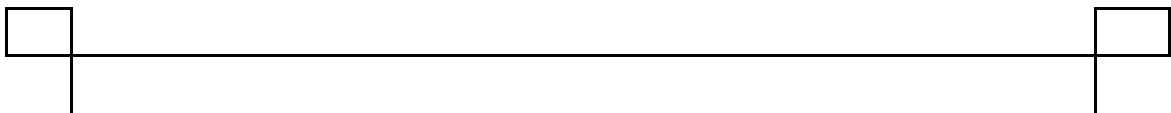


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