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Placing Effective Newspaper Advertisements

By Barrett Niehus

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For small business professionals, placing advertisements in newspapers and magazines requires a lot of forethought and planning. There are many parts to placing an effective ad, the least of which is designing the ad itself. Consideration must be made to how and where the advertisement is going to run, as well as the length and amount of exposure the advertisement will receive. The following is a basic guide to help you develop the most effective fitness and personal training advertisement.

Developing an effective advertisement begins not by sitting down to write copy, but instead begins with research. Find out what periodicals are available to advertise in, and what periodicals your clients read. Make a list of local magazines, newsletters, and newspapers that you would be interested in. Contact the advertising departments of these periodicals and ask to speak to your area accounts representative. Many magazines and papers have reps covering specific areas of your county, city, or state. When speaking to the person, explain to them who you are and what you wish to accomplish. Most representatives are very helpful in making suggestions regarding proper placement of ads, and may be able to offer suggestions that you had not yet considered.

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When speaking to your local rep, you should make sure to obtain the following information:

1. Rate Card: Have the rep fax or mail you a current rate sheet so that you know exactly how much your advertisement will cost.
2. Current Demographics: Each newspaper and magazine tracks the number and type of people that read their publications. Many publications also track

the spending habits and reading habits of their demographic. Make sure to obtain a list of the periodical's demographics, this is the most valuable piece of information that a fitness trainer can obtain from an ad rep.

3. Submission Requirements and definition of "Photo Ready:" Make sure to find out what is required to submit an article. Find out what form the ad must be in, and when submission deadlines are scheduled. Also, find out what the periodical's definition of photo-ready is. This definition varies from paper to paper, and may vary from a concept sketch to pre-printed three color film. Make sure that the representative explains how the ad must be submitted.

4. Special Promotions: Many times, magazines and newspapers implement their own promotion programs or events. As a trainer, these promotions may provide you with the added exposure that you need. Be sure to ask if there are any upcoming events or additional publications that might address your needs.

5. Creative Design: The final thing that you should ask the representative is whether they offer creative design assistance, and if there is a cost for such assistance. Most newspapers offer graphic design services to advertisers who are placing ads in their papers. Better still, many of

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these services are included in the price of advertising. Ask if the periodical can help you with the graphics on your ad and if you will be charged for this service. Personal trainers live on a budget, and this is a great way to save what would otherwise be spent on graphic artists.

Now that you have the information about your advertising options, it is time to decide exactly what and how you are going to advertise. Sit down and write out **EXACTLY WHO YOU ARE SELLING TO**. Which fitness clients are you trying to attract? Define the age, sex, and specific demographic that you are trying to attract and train. Be specific, people who want to train

to lose weight are in a completely different demographic than those who want to train to gain lean muscle mass.

After you have written down your specific training demographic, write down why people in this group would want your services. Write down what you believe they want, and what value they will receive by choosing you as their personal trainer. Once again, be specific, this will be the foundation of your advertisement. Keep in mind that most people will not pick up the phone for an advertisement that says "get fit." However, millions of

people every day invest hundreds of thousands of dollars to "lose weight." Make sure that you know the real reason why a client would chose you as their trainer.

Now that you have chosen who you are marketing to, and what you are offering, it is a simple matter of choosing which magazine or newspaper to advertise in. Match the demographics of the magazines with the demographic of the fitness clients that you are trying to reach.

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You have chosen where you are going to advertise, and what you are selling, so now it is time to determine what the ad is going to say and how it is going to be laid out. This is where the assistance of magazine creative designers is invaluable. However, the onus is still upon you to write the copy. In order to develop effective ad copy, there are a few basic facts that you must address to attract fitness clients.

You will usually have less than 0.8 seconds to get a potential client's attention. Make sure that the ad uses attention-getting words and phrases along with proper colors. Use phrases that attract attention such as Free, Special Offer, Limited Time, Sale, Money, and Sex. There is a large volume of research available on words that sell effectively. If you are planning on placing many advertisements, it may be prudent to research these words at

the library or on the net.

In addition to attention-grabbing words, proper use of color is invaluable to create an effective display ad. Red and Yellow stand out among all other colors, and are usually attract the most attention. If you are placing color ads, these colors should be considered.

When writing the copy, word it in such a way that it addresses your training clients specific need. Refer back to your notes on why the client would want to use you as their trainer, and what would they expect out of your services. Don't offer to help people "Get Fit!" when you can offer to "Lose Ten Pounds Fast!" Most people don't care about fitness for fitness' sake. Most just want to look and feel good. Address the specific needs of your target client, and word it to address specific wants, worries or concerns.

Word the advertisement in a way that creates emotion. A client will only

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act if you can create enough emotion to motivate them. How many of people out there say they want to get fit and lose weight, but have yet to call

you? Unless you create enough emotion to make them act, they will never respond to your ad. Create negative feelings toward where they are at right now, and positive emotion towards what a change in fitness will be like.

Before and after pictures are especially effective in creating emotional responses. If you are in doubt, watch late night infomercials, or flip through Flex or Muscle and Fitness magazine. Each ad creates an effective emotional response targeted to a specific fitness demographic.

Now that your ad uses wording to create emotion, it is time to encourage

action. You should now make an offer. **EVERY ADVERTISEMENT SHOULD HAVE AN**

OFFER. Showing before and after pictures may motivate some people, but you will have a much better response if you ask the customer to contact you.

Putting your contact information is not enough to get most people to pick up

the phone. Make sure the advertisement asks your potential personal training clients to contact you, and does so in such a way that the customer will be

motivated to call now as opposed to waiting for three months. Once again,

EVERY ADVERTISEMENT FOR PERSONAL FITNESS TRAINING SHOULD INCLUDE AN OFFER.

As a final inclusion to your ad copy, determine how you are going to track the response that you get from your advertisement. You will be spending a lot of money on developing and placing the ad, Wouldn't it be

prudent to find out how effective the ad was? The most common way to track

the effectiveness of an advertisement is to include a coupon or a special

offer. This serves a dual purpose, 1) it serves as an offer to entice

fitness clients to call, 2) it provides a way for you to know how many people responded to an advertisement.

You now have written your copy, and have either been working with the periodical's graphic artist, or have been working with an independent designer or publishing program. After you have developed the advertisement, and had it printed in a photo-ready format, it is time to submit it to the magazines or newspaper. When placing your ad, make sure that you are told the specific times that it will go to press, when it will be circulated.

Also, ask if the periodical can send you a printed proof of the ad before it goes to final press; just to make sure that the colors and words line up. After printing, make sure that the periodical sends you a copy of the magazine or newspaper with your ad included.

These are the fundamental steps that personal trainers, fitness clubs, and small businesses follow when placing advertisements. The process is not complex, but it does take some thought to create an effective advertisement.

Barrett Niehus www.alltrainers.com Business & Marketing Resources for Fitness Trainers

Two Top Ways To Promote Your Business In Ezines

By Ken Hill

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If you'd like to increase your sales and profits, two of the best and most effective ways to advertise your business in ezines are to:

1. Place top sponsor ads.

These ads are typically placed at the very top of the ezine you purchase advertising ensuring that your ad will get noticed.

Many ezines also provide an archive of their past issues on their websites which means that you can continue to get exposure for your business even long after your ad is originally run.

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When placing your ad, make sure to track your advertising so that you will know which ad copy you use that is most effective and which ezines pull in the best response for your offer.

Some companies that offer ad tracking services are:

1. <http://www.adminder.com>
2. <http://adtrackz.com>
3. <http://www.hypertracker.com>
4. <http://www.roibot.com>
5. <http://www.statcruncher.com>

Once you know by tracking your ad which ad copy and ezines pull in the best response, all you have to do is keep running your ad.

2. Place solo ads.

Placing solo ads can be a very effective way to generate more sales for your business.

The main reason placing a solo ad can be so effective is that your solo ad will not have any competition from any other advertiser.

Some ezines also give their subscribers the option of opting out of receiving solo ads which will provide an even more targeted audience for your offer.

When placing your solo ad, keep your ad copy short and try to come up with a good headline to draw people into reading your ad.

As with sponsor ads, make sure that you track how well your ad does so that once you know that placing a solo ad in a particular ezine brings in a good response you can continue to run your ad.

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