

Other Types of Advertising to Consider

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The world of advertising has changed dramatically over the last decade. Social Media, email advertising, sponsorships, and other methods have forever changed how companies of all sizes advertise.

Advertising can be a powerful way to deal with marketing challenges such as low brand awareness, a declining customer base or heavy competition. Or perhaps you simply have a desire to drive more foot traffic to your business and think advertising can help.

Most of us couldn't afford a 30-second national TV ad during a big championship game. Luckily, there are many more affordable and cost effective techniques available if you choose wisely. Here are 7 types of advertising that needn't cost a lot, and can fit within a small business budget:



Social Media Ads - Ads on social sites such as Facebook, YouTube and Twitter can cost just pennies for each person who views your ad. The way each social platform charges is different, and the type of action you are looking for (view, click-through, etc.) can vary the rate. With social media ads you can set a small daily budget -- perhaps just \$20 per day, or around \$600 a month.

Classified Ads - Classified ads are perfect if you are looking to post a job opening or offer a household service such as lawn cutting or cleaning. A classified ad might cost \$200 for a 30-day run in some newspapers -- or less for a shorter time frame or in a smaller paper.

Event and charity sponsorships - Sponsoring local events such as high school sports, charities or causes, can be relatively inexpensive. You can get considerable visibility starting as little as \$500. Donate branded giveaway items at the event such as key chains, notepads or water bottles with your company logo at a cost of a few hundred dollars more. You'll not only get business visibility, but also the satisfaction of supporting your community or favorite cause.

Sign Spinners - Holding a grand opening? Running a special sale? Consider a sign spinner service, i.e., someone who holds up a large sign near a main thoroughfare and spins it around to capture attention. At \$30 an hour (rates vary by market) for a professional sign-spinning service, it would cost \$750 to advertise 5 hours a day for 5 days. Factor in the cost of printing a large sign, too. Check your local ordinances to make sure sign spinning is allowed.

Every Door Direct Mail - One of the U.S. Postal Service's innovations is a lower-cost way to send direct mail. With the [Every Door Direct mapping tool](#), you identify neighborhoods you want to reach. For example, real estate agents or home improvement contractors could do a mailing of 5,000 postcards for under \$1,500. That estimate factors in printing costs for 6.5 x 9 inch cards and the Every Door Direct special postage rate of \$0.177 per piece (as of this writing).

Local TV Ads - While not the lowest cost ads out there, local TV ads are much less expensive than national television spots. The cost depends on how many people reached, time of day, and other factors. You'll also need to work in the cost to produce your television ad, which could be several thousand dollars.

It might cost \$5,000 to \$20,000 for broadcast time to reach an audience of between 1,000,000 and 4,000,000 viewers. However, if you sell big-ticket items such as cars or jewelry in a competitive market, the expense may be worth it.

Local Deal Vouchers - In terms of out-of-pocket expense, local deals with sites like Groupon, Living Social, and others can be the least expensive because you do not pay a dime up front. But - watch out. In the end, local deal vouchers can be expensive if you give away all your profit. The way they work is that you offer the consumer a discount - usually significant. Let's say an item normally sells for \$50. You create a Groupon local deal for half off at \$25.00. Let's assume Groupon takes 50% of the consumer's price, in this case \$12.50. You receive the remaining \$12.50 -- on a product you typically charge \$50.00 for!

Note: the above advertising cost estimates are just that -- estimates. Many factors affect advertising costs, so always get firm price quotes in advance.

Finally, remember that the most benefit comes from combining advertising with other marketing. For example, advertising your grand opening along with hiring a DJ and providing food during the event, together with a publicity campaign targeting your local media and postings on your social media channels, may get far more mileage than advertising alone.