



Let **OCS, Inc.** assist you with any of your Promotional ideas or program needs.

In addition, we can handle any of your Direct Mail Services, Address List Development, Commercial Printing or Fund Raising requirements!

Voice: 1-800-877-4627 • Fax: 410-795-7261
 ocsinc@ocsmail.com • www.ocsmail.com

The goal of our newsletter is to help our clients grow their business. Promotional products can increase awareness, name recognition and lead generation. Premiums will improve customer loyalty, employee morale and productivity.

Winter/Spring 2006

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Promotional Times™

Information and Ideas for Improving Sales, Image and Profits



Go Ape

Part of the famed Guerilla Marketing manifesto is: attracting new customers requires multiple exposures to your message. If prospects are too busy or skeptical to respond to single-shot ads, woo them for months and turbo charge the effort with incentives.

Start with an introductory letter about how you can help *grow their business* and include a packet of seeds in the envelope. A week later, follow-up with a personal phone call asking how you can help meet their needs. Next, send a postcard with testimonials and offer a free consultation. A few weeks later send a key-chain flashlight with a message that you can *show them the light*, if they will agree to a meeting.

An Internet company wanted to expand into the Phoenix area last year. To generate curiosity, execs sent colorful postcards and made phone calls inviting media and community leaders to an important secret announcement.

The guerilla campaign peaked with a formal invitation and a specially designed "genie answer ball." A letter invited recipients to ask questions such as *Who is behind this announcement?* and *What will they be doing?* The custom "eight-ball" gave cryptic answers including *I can't tell you* and *Come and find out*. 85% of the people who got the package attended the event with anticipation and excitement.

Make premiums a vital part of your sustained marketing efforts. Remember the Guerilla's mantra: repetition leads to familiarity, familiarity leads to confidence, and when prospects have confidence in you, they become customers.



Brand Excellence

Successful companies know they must keep their brand visible for new and repeat customers. **Besides using traditional media, there are other lower-cost methods that appeal to your target markets.**

Commerce Bank commits at least 10% of its annual advertising budget to promotional products, spending several million dollars a year. Relying on a single, unifying logo featuring a stylized "C", the bank prints its brand on everything from





Pop-Up Quiz

Direct mail is a superb way to reach customers. The challenge is avoiding the circular file. **How can you make your message memorable?** See how your ideas compare to those of real-life organizations.

1. Challenge: A school wished to

raise funds by selling personalized paving bricks to build a new campus. Solution: 10,000 requests were sent to alumni with a pop-up "brick" replica. (Pop-ups mail flat then jump into 3-D when taken from the envelope.) More than 500 bricks have been sold so far at \$1,000 each, with the campaign still going strong.



2. Challenge: A home

developer wanted potential buyers to come to their Egyptian themed feast with a viewing of the "empire." Solution: Invitations with a pop-up pyramid, guaranteeing it wasn't overlooked. The unique presentation garnered excellent attendance, with a 28% response rate.



3. Challenge: An apple grower needed to convince buyers that Michigan apples make the best pies. Solution: The company's sales pitch was packaged in a detailed slide chart, shaped like a delicious apple pie, featuring information on how to purchase and why to use Michigan apples. Recipients found the info irresistible!

Brand Excellence

continued from front page

baseballs to coin purses and stuffed animals. Customers are given C-shaped toy banks, and T-shirts are given to kids who take part in its youth savings program. Employees get free promotional items too, including lunch carriers and briefcases, so the Commerce Bank identity is proudly on display wherever they go.

Company officials say promotional products reinforce their entire marketing strategy. If you want to be more than brand X in your market, raise your profile with a smart branding



Ask and Ye Shall Receive Referrals

Don't forget that existing customers are a gold mine for referrals, but only when asked! Studies show that when you offer promotional-product incentives through direct mail, you drive up customer satisfaction and secure more referrals. The offer of a cool ballpoint pen plus entry to a sweepstakes drew 500% more response than a letter alone, according to a 2005 study by Louisiana State University.



Case Study: Referral Gift

A national car insurance provider wanted to spice up its referral program with a gift new policyholders were guaranteed to use. It settled on a sleek document holder drivers could use to organize their glove box. The imprinted holder included map pockets, a zippered compartment, and loops for a tire gauge, mini flashlight and a pen (all of which could be used as future incentives). Agents immediately began ordering the thank-you gifts and all reported enthusiastic responses among customers.



Contact us for expertise on products we know will be used and appreciated by your clients!



Safety Smarts

It's no secret that a safer workplace pays off in more ways than one. To breathe life into your safety program, offer incentives and a clear message.



A Midwestern agricultural manufacturer decreased its claims by 67% within one year with a simple campaign. Dubbed SEED - Safety's Every Employee's Duty - the kickoff involved numbered buttons to be worn daily, giving accident-free workers eligibility for prize drawings. Prizes ranged from hardhat decals to key tags, emphasizing the SEED safety theme. Quarterly safety recognition awards included imprinted radios and stadium blankets. All of the 600-plus employees participated, achieving record results.

Even the most basic safety incentives can make a big difference. One construction company distributes a logo'd beer mug monthly to each employee with a clean safety record. All of the company's 60 workers were huge beer fans, and it became a competition among them to collect the most mugs before the style was changed each year. **The \$3 mug added up to a 60% reduction in accidents over the course of 2 years.**





Spring Into '06 With These Hot Products



▶ **Vintage Drink.** Impress top clients or staffers with the gift of an unforgettable wine caddy, tastefully engraved with your name. Choose from a golfer, waiter, cowboy, doctor and other styles to satisfy any industry.



▶ **Good Times Roll.** This fun alarm clock entertains on wheels while serving a higher purpose: tirelessly displaying your name on the recipient's desk.



▶ **Hot & Steamy.** A USB mug warmer is a great leave-behind or appointment incentive. Couple it with an imprinted mug for follow-up visits!



▶ **Zip It Up.** As winter fades to spring, a quality fleece vest heats up promotions centered on camping and outdoors, education and customer-retention.



▶ **Read All About It.** Make your mark with cool lenticular vinyl bookmarks screen printed with your logo.



▶ **Games We Play.** Impress travelers and whole families with action-packed game packages.



▶ **In the Bag.** Entice customers with a handsome incentive like this document bag with zippered compartments and storage areas for supplies.



Attention, please!

Like many businesses, nonprofits often find their publicity strategies hampered by tight budgets. Select the right incentive and you can net immediate attention with lasting impact, and not break the bank.



A group of Chicago nonprofit leaders linked its last membership drive to the bobblehead doll craze. Bobbleheads were created in the likeness of the CEO and board president for The Association Forum of Chicagoland, which has 1,500 members. The bobbleheads became centerpieces of publicity kits that also included postcards of the dolls at famous Chicago sites, along with promotional magnets and membership forms.

The kits were sent to 50 active members, encouraging them to find new recruits. Enrollment numbers blew away expectations! **An investment of \$10,000 led to 228 new members with \$342,000 in additional dues.**

Smart low-budget promotions can also pack a wallop. A Southwestern state bar association sent journalists a 12-month calendar strip to stick on their computer monitors. The logo'd strip featured the bar's website and number. The 2004 promotion was so popular - with media inquiries jumping by 20% - the state bar repeated it a year later, doubling its order.

Are you starved for attention? Let us counsel you on the perfect promotion to turn heads.

Lagniappe

(a little something extra) Quotable Quotes

Life is a grindstone, but whether it grinds us down or polishes us up depends on us. — Thomas Holdcroft

You do not have to be great to start, but you have to start to be great. — Joe Sabah

To do a common thing, done uncommonly well, brings success. — Henry John Heinz

I don't want any yes-men around me. I want everybody to tell me the truth, even if it costs them their jobs. — Sam Goldwyn

I have enough money to last me the rest of my life unless I buy something. — Jackie Mason

The Riddler

YOUR CHANCE TO WIN A FREE GIFT

Q: What is so fragile that when you say its name you break it?

Note: The first five people to correctly answer the riddle will win a free gift. Call or fax your answer (see form on back).



Life Lessons (part 1)

1. Do not walk behind me, for I may not lead.
Do not walk ahead of me, for I may not follow.
Do not walk beside me either. Pretty much just leave me alone.
2. The journey of a thousand miles begins with a broken fan belt and a leaky tire.
3. It's always darkest before dawn, so if you're going to steal your neighbor's newspaper, that's the time to do it.
4. Don't be irreplaceable. If you can't be replaced, you can't be promoted.
5. Always remember that you're unique, just like everyone else.
6. If you think nobody cares if you're alive, try missing a couple of car payments.
7. Before you criticize someone, you should walk a mile in their shoes. That way, when you criticize them, you're a mile away and you have their shoes.

Dear Addy,

ANSWERS TO YOUR PROMOTIONAL QUESTIONS

- Q:** We're looking for something we can leave with prospects who request bids on our security system. Any recommendations?
- A:** How about an inexpensive but valuable and safety-minded item most people don't have? A thin nightlight will beam your name 24 hours per day and promote the value of your security products. Leave a few more behind after installation so your customers can share your name!
- Q:** What can my roofing company use as an incentive to sign up homeowners at an upcoming spring trade show?
- A:** Offer rain gauges to those who enroll onsite for a free estimate. The handy, logo'd gift will remind them of coming rains and leaky roofs - and broadcast your company's name for years to come. Consumer tradeshow are an awesome opportunity for any business to send prospects home with a giveaway matching their service or product.



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Call, fax or email us with your comments.**

This Newsletter Provides Information and Ideas for Improving Sales, Image and Profits.
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OCS, Inc.
Voice: 1-800-877-4627
Fax: 410-795-7261
E-mail: ocsinc@ocsmail.com
www.ocsmail.com

OCS ... Omni Computer Services, Inc.
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Riddle Answer _____