

# The agency production timetable



Three of the key departments in an agency are creative, production and media. Once you provide the advertising plan to the *Trade Communications Bureau*, they'll go to work for you with the advertising agency.

Writing, producing and shipping all take time. Just how much time depends on the particular ad or advertising campaign, but there are some general rules that can be followed.

The timetable here is based on production of a four-colour ad. It takes longer than others, but it provides a good basic guideline of the time needed to do a good job.

## 1. Costing 3 days

Once you have completed your advertising plan, the cost of producing your advertisement must be estimated. The advertising agency's media buyer prepares a plan recommending the media the ad should run in; the artist estimates how much your ad will cost to design and produce; and the writer estimates how much time will be spent writing the ad. It usually takes at least two days to accurately estimate an ad, plus another day for client approval of the estimate.

## 2. Writing and design 5 days

Once approval to proceed is given, allow five days for copywriting and preparation of a preliminary layout (the design of the ad).

## 3. Approval of ad layout 7 days

Now the ad has to be approved, first by the *Trade Communications Bureau*, then by you. If you're posted in a foreign country the approval may be handled by the desk officer in your geographic branch. The ad must then be approved by the *Advertising Management Group*. Once the approval number is given, *Media Canada* reserves your advertising space. Count on at least two days for approval or up to five days if the ad has to be sent to the post for approval, plus another two days for *Advertising Management Group* approval.

## 4. Artwork production 4 days

If original photography is required, set aside four days — one for planning, one for the actual shooting, one for developing and one for producing the final print. Meanwhile, the copy will be typeset and final artwork will be prepared, which also takes about four days.

## 5. Approval of artwork 2 days

Allow two days for approval of the artwork. It's your last chance to look it over and you want to be sure everything is right.

## 6. Final film 4 days

Regardless of how many colours you are running in your ad — from one to four — the publication requires film for the printing process. Preparation of final film takes up to four days.

## 7. Shipping 7 days

Allow up to seven days for shipping your final product to the publication — especially if the ad is running in a country other than Canada.

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32 working days

That's right — one full-colour ad ideally takes thirty-two working days to produce. Note, we've said "ideally." It usually doesn't work that way, but the more time you give your agency to work on your ad, the more time they have to do the job well.

Remember too, that sometimes things get held up in the works, so try to allow as much time as you can for ad production.

**NOTE:** Although the agency production timetable is 32 working days, also allow two to three weeks to prepare your advertising plan.