

Trade Advertising Guide

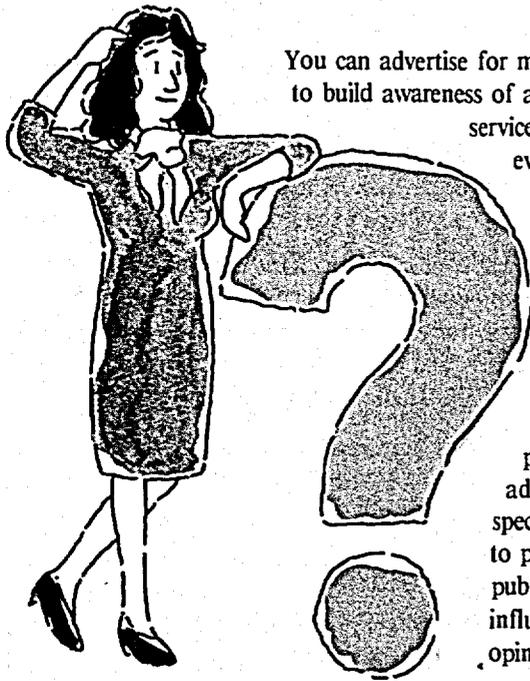
Creating good advertising isn't easy. You have probably heard about advertising that has won awards but looking at award-winning ads doesn't tell you what makes them better. This guide has been developed to help give you an idea of how to make your advertising programs work for you so that you see results.

Just as an advertising professional can't possibly know every last detail about your job, you don't need to know everything about preparing and producing an advertising program. This guide is designed to give you a quick overview and highlight some things to keep in mind.

Advertising — for our purposes — is buying space or time in print and electronic media like trade magazines, newspapers, billboards, television and radio to attract target audiences to a specific message. It is not brochures, coupons, direct mail, special publications or posters.

Advertising is one of many communications products or tools available. And there's a lot more to it than simply using the word "Canada" and a red maple leaf. Your message must compete with thousands of others, so it is important that it be as effective as possible. This guide can help you learn more about the advertising process and show you how to work with the department's *Trade Communications Bureau — Trade Communications Abroad (BTA)* and *Trade Communications Canada (BTC)* — to create better, more effective advertisements.

Why advertise?



You can advertise for many reasons: to build awareness of a product, service or special event; to identify an item with a specific corporation or government body; to create an image or to position an advertiser in a specific sector; to promote a public issue; to influence public opinion and so

forth. The point is advertise only if you have something valid to say and there is a positive cost-benefit involved. For example, you would probably decide to place a classified ad if your message was what a great car or used VCR you had for sale. But if you didn't have the funds to buy the ad, you'd find another way of communicating your message, perhaps by approaching your friends and relying on word of mouth.

Doesn't it make sense to take the same approach at the office? Decide what your objective is; identify your key message; make sure it's valid; look at cheaper, but effective techniques to carry your message; then decide if advertising fits into your communications plan. Remember, there are limitations to what your advertising dollar can and cannot do. For instance, good trade advertising can build awareness; motivate the Canadian business community into using export programs and services; or influence international purchasing or marketing decisions that will lead to sales for Canadian companies.

On the other hand, tens of millions of dollars are wasted annually in "show biz" advertising of unwanted products or services. Also, a one-shot ad doesn't necessarily offer a quick fix. Nor can an ad communicate a complete mandate. If you're not sure whether or not you should be advertising, talk to the people in the *Trade Communications Bureau*. They can help you decide if advertising is the best solution.

When to use advertising

Use advertising when it is appropriate and affordable.

Remember to be realistic in your expectations. If you want to increase the number of Canadian companies doing business in any country, running an ad once is not sufficient. Complex messages, or ones designed to alter people's thinking require an extensive communications campaign. In such cases, the cost of advertising may be prohibitive, and you should consider other communications methods. Ads that appear only once or twice can be an excellent way to announce a trade show or a special event, but for a campaign, one shot affairs often have the effect of simply wasting your budget.

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