

Effective Music Industry Advertising

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Follow these hints and advertising can play an important role as part of a carefully conceived and executed promotional strategy:

-- Many smaller ads are better than one big ad. Repetition of your message is crucially important to your target market. You must bring your music products and services to their attention repeatedly.

-- Don't use an ad to sell directly, especially a small or classified ad. Use it to generate leads. The reason is simple. It's hard to sell most music products and services from a few lines of copy. People want complete information before they make their buying decision. Elicit a response from your target market -- get them to contact you -- and then you can control the process. Advertising works if you use it this way.

Include these main parts in every ad:

-- Audience identifier. You can skip the audience identifier if your ad appears in a targeted magazine or Web site. There's no sense wasting words on "Attention Producers" if the ad is in Video Producers. The beauty of regular classified advertising is you can skip most identifiers because your ad falls under the appropriate classification. That leaves you room to concentrate on benefits.

-- Main benefit. Pack your ad with benefits. Focus on your clients and provide them with the results and benefits they get by using your music products and services. All benefits can be presented in one of these two ways as the basis for your offer: Remove a pain; or promote a gain. Every benefit your music product or service offers can be framed either way. For example, to promote my commercial music business, I could choose either headline to deliver my main benefits.

-- Stop paying too much for original music. (focuses on removing a pain)

-- Save money on your next music package. (hints at gaining something)

-- Offer. Invite prospects to contact you for more information, offer a free initial consultation, or send a free demo, brochure, or booklet. Don't push the item itself, instead stress the benefit of having that item. And don't try to sell them your music in an ad.

-- Necessary details. Your contact information is crucial. Put in your phone number, e-mail, and Web URL.

Here are a few other tips:

-- Don't use abbreviations. Whittle down the words to the barest minimum needed to present your benefit and make your offer. Don't sacrifice words for clarity, though.

-- Make sure you track all your advertising. When people contact you, take a second to ask them how and where they heard of you. Keep a record of their responses so you can see where your money, time, and energy are best spent.

-- Talk to your prospects, not at them. Use simple, everyday language and write short, action-packed copy that moves from one place to the next.

-- Cut to the chase. Don't spend too much time on useless background material. State your case up front, make your point, and present your argument. Remember your job is to motivate further action, not educate or pontificate.

-- Use action words and prefer the simple words to their longer counterparts.

-- Avoid hype like the plague. If you can defend your claim, it's not hype. If you can't defend your claim, it's not hype either -- it's lying.