

## Secrets of Successful Yellow Pages Advertising

Year after year the yellow pages are full of ineffective ads. Follow these sure-fire tips to better your response and get more for your advertising investment.

1. The size of your ad depends on 3 factors: your budget, your competition and your current staffing situation. If other advertisers under your heading all have simple listings or small ads, consider the possibility that the public is not going to the yellow pages to find your product or service. However, if your heading is dominated by large ads, you should consider doing the same if you want to compete. Research confirms that most yellow page users choose larger ads. If your budget cannot support the investment of a large ad, consider buying the largest ad you can afford and fill it with ad copy or keep a minimal yellow pages presence and put your money in some other advertising media. Lastly, even if you have the budget for a large ad, it will do you no good if your office is not staffed with personnel to answer the phone.
2. Color in your ad will attract more attention - only if it appears on a page in which all or most of the other ads are black. Of course, the yellow pages cannot guarantee placement, so your investment in color may not be as effective. You're better off using that money for a larger ad or some other advertising medium.
3. Ad copy is probably the most important element to a successful yellow pages ad. When the public goes to the yellow pages to search for a company to fulfill their needs, they are serious buyers and are in the latter stages of the buying cycle. Think of the questions people are asking when they call and tailor your ad to answer them. Don't worry about cluttering up your ad with copy - this may prevent the prospect from moving on to the next ad.
4. Avoid having the yellow pages design your ad. The designers at the yellow pages do an adequate job; however, they have three shortcomings: they know nothing about your business and could care less about it, and they design many ads each day and this may result in most of the ads looking the same. For about the cost of one month's yellow pages ad, hire a professional to create your ad. You'll get professional advice and someone who will work with you and find out about your business and your goals. The result will be an ad that incorporates that information with knowledge and experience of advertising.
5. Make sure you track your results. Your staff needs to be familiar with the ad and its copy. That way they know what questions to expect from callers and how to answer them. Train them to ask callers where they got your phone number or, if you expect walk-in business, ask them why they stopped by.

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### About the Author

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