

## Do Not Believe the Cheap Advertising Hype

As a small business owner, you cannot afford to pay top dollar on advertising, like the big boys can. However, you also can't afford to get ripped off, which could be even more damaging to your company. Be careful when you are looking for companies to help in your advertising campaign. Price should not be the only factor that you are concerned with. Usually, if their price seems too low to be believable, it is.

There are some things you can do to help protect you against getting ripped off by a less than legitimate advertising company.

### Check References

It is amazing how few business owners actually check references when they are shopping around for advertising companies. This should be a no-brainer. You should never do business with anyone before checking up on them.

All you have to do to get references is ask! Most companies will be more than happy to provide you with a list of associates or satisfied customers that you can contact. In fact, if a company is reluctant to give you a list of references, you might as well walk out of the door right then and there. They are not worth doing business with.

### Customer Testimonials

Do not settle with checking the references that the company provides you. Do some of your own research and contact some past customers of the company to find out how good (or bad) their experience was.

When you listen to customer responses to a company, take everything to heart. You might hear something like, "Well, they didn't get my project done on time, but it was only a small flyer printing, so it was not a big deal." WRONG! It should be a big deal to you. If, by talking to past customers, it becomes apparent that the advertising company does not take even the small jobs seriously, then move on to someone else. You want a company that puts all of their resources into every job they do.

### Negotiate

The art of negotiation has largely been lost in America today. Do not be afraid to "haggle" with your advertising company a little bit if you are not happy with their price. If you are very impressed with their work, and you have received positive comments from past customers, but can't afford their asking price, go ahead and ask for a deal. You might be pleasantly surprised by what happens. Most companies are willing to make exceptions in order to get your business.

### Check Their Work

Obviously, this should be one of the very first things you do. I should not even have to mention this, but, sadly, many businesspeople fail to check the work of the advertisers they go into business with.

Most companies will have a lot of sample work for you to look at right in their office. You should also look around – especially with other companies in the area – to find work that was done by your prospective partner. You should be very satisfied with their work before you sign a contract with them.

## About the Author

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