

## Use Trading to Reduce Advertising Costs

As a small business owner, your advertising budget is likely quite limited. How can you compete with the larger companies that have the money to buy ads on television and radio stations, when you can barely afford quality postcard printing? The answer to this very valid question is to look for opportunities to trade your services for advertising space.

Think about what it is that your business offers. Do you have a product that you could provide to someone for free in exchange for advertising space? Believe it or not, many businesses are happy to give you some free or discounted advertisements if you can give them something in return.

Here is an example. Imagine that your business creates customized t-shirts for your clients. If you need some free advertisements, contact your local radio station and offer to make them some t-shirts for the station that could be used in free giveaways. In return, ask that your business be named whenever a t-shirt is given to a caller or contest winner. You will receive free airtime for your business, and the radio station will receive a great product to give to listeners. As an added benefit, people will be wearing your shirts all around town.

If you are in the market for mailings, such as postcards or flyers, you can still trade to get a discounted or free product. Consider contacting your chosen printer and asking for a break on your cost in return for allowing the printer to put its own contact information on your ad somewhere. Chances are you will be given a break in return for the advertising space you are offering the printer.

Believe it or not, you can even earn free or discounted time on the television through trading. Are you an expert in some industry? Perhaps you are a seasoned realtor with knowledge of the real estate industry. You could volunteer to be the "industry expert" with your local television station. Whenever you appear on the television, you will be inadvertently promoting your business. Your potential customers will see your voice and hear your advice, adding validity to your name and your business.

Newspapers are yet another venue that you can often use to trade services or products for advertising space. Newspapers often have contests and need prizes to give out to winners. If you provide those prizes, the newspapers will likely give you some free advertising space in return.

As you can see, you can get some of the best types of advertising for little to no cost. All it takes is a little time and a lot of creativity. Think of the media with which you would like to advertise. Then, think of a way that the owners of those media venues could benefit from your product or service. If you have something valuable to offer, you can receive something valuable in return!

### About the Author

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